GANDHI & GANDHISM

B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

VOL. I

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Gandhi and Gandhism

[A STUDY]

By

DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

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"रथस्यैकं चक्रं भुजगयमिता : सप्ततुरगाः ।
निरालंबो मार्गश्चरण रहित : सारथिरपि ।
रविर्यात्यैवांन्तं प्रतिदिनमपारस्य नभसः
क्रियासिद्धि : सत्वेवसति महतां नोपकरणे"

DEDICATED

TO

THE SACRED MEMORY

OF

THE RISHIS OF OLD,

THE PROPHETS AND PRAVAKTHAS,

THE SAINTS OF ALL AGES,

THE MASTERS, MESSIAHS AND MEDIATORS,

THE VALIS, RASULS AND PAIGAMBARS,

THE AVATHARS, STHITHA PRAJNAS AND POORNA PURUSHAS

THAT

HAVE PREACHED AND PRACTISED

THE

ETERNAL

PRINCIPLES

OF

SATYA AND AHIMSA

BY

AN ARDENT VOTARY THEREOF

WITH

A FULL CONSCIOUSNESS

OF

HIS OWN FOIBLES AND FAILINGS

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My foremost obligations are to the Kitabistan whose management have directed my thoughts along the lines in these pages in which they have been rendered into print and through which they have been made available to the public. The book of Gandhi's life within whose sphere I have been an atom floating about for some years, is of course my main guide and inspiration. The pages of 'Young India' and 'Harijan' are the treasure-house on which all students of Gandhism have to draw for generations to come and perhaps for centuries. Besides these, there is the volume of the 'Appreciations of Mahatma Gandhi' by numerous writers of the world amongst whom you find the names of many eminent scholars and savants, published as the '70th Birthday-Souvenir' by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, which has been profoundly helpful in shaping and systematizing thought.[1] Next to it are Gregg's remarkable publication entitled: "The Power of Non-Violence," Aldous Huxley's "Ends and Means" and Gandhi Sutras by D. S. Sarma, all of which have proved valuable and excellent aids. I have, without permission, incorporated two articles on opium by Shri. G. Bardoloi, as they are authoritative pronouncements by an ex-Premier of Assam contributed to the Press. Where

[1] The numbers indicating merely pages which the reader meets with in the book always refer to the pages of this publication of Sir S. Radhakrishnan's—EDITOR

detailed acknowledgments appeared somewhat cumbersome or even not possible, the obligations to Truth are discharged by the sentences quoted being placed within quotation marks. The onset of the latest Satyagraha movement gives added interest to the publication but has the effect of hastening the completion of the work. One is not sure that the haste has not led to hurry in its preparation.

MACHILIPATNAM B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
DECEMBER 28TH, 1941

FOREWORD

A request last summer from KITABISTAN for a book, on GANDHI AND GANDHISM accounts for this fresh endeavour to rearrange my ideas on the subject. These ideas have been nursed and growing for over two decades on a soil which was made originally suitable for their reception by a long course of training in Christian Educational institutions and which was ploughed and fertilized for another two decades by the cult of the new spirit in Bengal in 1905 as well as by the Home Rule Movement of Dr. Besant's during the Great War (1914-1918). The end of that war synchronized with the onset of the Gandhian Era in Indian politics, ethics and economics or to put it compendiously, in Indian Renaissance.

In 1857, there was the first War of Indian Independence, somewhat unorganized, which had a cause, a flag and a leader, but whose plan and purpose were not of a sublime order. It was all on the plane of violence. The Congress took over the task of achieving Indian emancipation from 1885 onwards but confined itself to the intellectual plane for over 30 years. The splitting of heads of 1857, gave place to a splitting of hairs till 1919. Then came the era of *soul-force*—superseding the earlier periods and programmes of *brute-force* and *brain-force*. We have just celebrated the seventy-second birth-day of Gandhi who has inaugurated this new era. He has fought several battles in life and he is now engaged in the last of them,—undoubtedly,

the biggest of them all as well,—not because of the numbers sent to jail, but because of his determination to crown his labours for his country by offering himself as a sacrifice on the altar of the Motherland through a Fast—it may be unto death.

Year in, year out, we have celebrated the birth-days of our heroes, martyrs and saints, our statesmen, artists and poets. We have paid our tributes in the past to the life-work of Dadabhoy and Phirozeshah Mehta, Gokhale and Tilak, Surendranath and Bepin Chandra Pal, Besant and Andrews, Motilal and Subramanya Iyer, Lala Lajpat Rai and Deshbandhu Das. The foot-prints on the sands of time that they have left are inde-lible. They guide us still, their memories kindle for ever in the Indian breast, thoughts and emotions that have helped to enliven our national life, uplift its ideals and ennoble its purposes. But alas! they are only memories left as a legacy to an admiring posterity.

Not so with Gandhi who is the living architect of India's fortune. As his span of life lengthens, his thoughts grow deeper, his plans more and more sublime. The sphere of his activities widens, the alti-tudes of his aspiration rise higher and higher. He has no vague and airy problems hanging high in the mid-air before him. His day-dreams of yesterday take shape as ideas of to-day, become outlined as plans of to-morrow and attain shape and size, proportion and perspective, in the programmes of the day after. If seventy-two crores worth of foreign fabrics are to be prevented from clothing thirty-five crores of people in India, he begins with his own inadequate *khaddar* dhoti and a rickety old charkha. If the untouchability of 40 to 50 million is to be removed, he undertakes a fast unto death, in order to retain the Harijans in the

Hindu fold and prevent "the dismemberment of those whom God hath united." If the sin-money of drink is to be abolished, he has made that the task of Provincial Ministries' zeal for ethical reform. To bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims, he fasted for 21 days in 1924. And in 1940, in his seventy-second year, he is making a herculean effort to release Hindusthan from the obligation of war effort, through negotiation with the Viceroy and through a campaign of Satyagraha and he contemplates a Central Government in India without armies, not merely under a plan of general disarmament but under the higher impetus of the ethical principle that underlies the theory of non-violence.

During the past two decades of Gandhi's ministry, he has steadily widened the base of the edifice of Indian nationalism even as he has raised its height *manzil ba manzil*. By 1928 he realized the important place which the States should hold in any scheme of Indian polity and conceded to them their proper status in Indian Swaraj. He has latterly advocated the abolition of the States' Peoples' Conference as a separate organization functioning in all its complements and components and virtually effected a merger between the executives of the Conference and of the Congress. To-day Gandhi is a tower of strength to the people of the States, and the one connecting link not only between the Provinces and the States, but between the princes and the people in the States themselves.

If you take a graph of Gandhi's activities ever since he finally returned to India in 1916, you will find the rises and falls over the *optimum* to be highly instructive. From a comparatively unobtrusive life in the interval between 1915 and 1919, he rose to the zenith at one bound in the Amritsar Congress and worked his way

up to leadership in Calcutta and at Nagpur in 1920. After a year and a quarter's hard work, he was put in jail and released in February 1924. For the next three or four years he devoted himself exclusively to the constructive programme so that he was more or less out of view from politics so-called in 1926, 1927 and 1928, until he played a notable part in the Calcutta session of the Congress in December 1928, and in less than a year, he gave oral notice to Lord Irwin in 1929, (December, 23rd) that he would lead a nation-wide movement for complete independence. This led to the Satyagraha campaign of 1930-1934, and then he retired from the Congress and was not much interested in its Council programme, until in 1937 he took an active part in negotiating the '*Assurances*' which led to the formation of provincial ministries by the Congress. He is like a swimmer in the mighty ocean flood who is now buoyed up on the crest of the advancing tide, and is now lost to public gaze in the depths of the receding wave. To-day, he is like a beacon light shining from on high, guiding the ship of the Congress in its voyage across the boisterous seas of wars and violence to the safe haven of Truth and Ahimsa. With him what counts is direction, not destination; attempt, not attainment; means, not ends. When the means are pure, when the attempt is honest and when the direction is correct, then the objective must be attained and an objective so attained ensures its own permanence and at the same time makes for the permanent well-being of one and all upon whom it may react.

This book is, therefore, presented to the KITABISTAN for publication as an earnest study of the principles and philosophy inculcated by Gandhi and of the plans of political as well as socio-economic reconstruction which

he has formulated on them, as constituting integral factors of a Swaraj India.

B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

THE ARGUMENT

We may briefly summarize mostly in Gandhi's own language the argument of the whole Gandhian movement which naturally becomes the argument of the Book itself.

Gandhi is not lacking in emotions but his teachings and tenets are not based on them. He believes in an all-pervading God,—a God who is above all and beyond all, but he is a God who is "even the atheism of the atheist." His God is Truth (*sat*) his truth is knowledge (*chit*) and where there is true knowledge there is bliss (*anand*). It is thus that he knows his God as *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. "To find truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny i.e., to become perfect. That is why Gandhi has always insisted that "Truth should be the very breath of our life." He would with the sages of *Mahabharatha* put truth in one scale-pan and all sacrifices in the other; and the former will outweigh the latter. Accordingly, he maintains that the pursuit of Truth is true *Bhakthi*. What may be apprehended as Truth by one, may not be accepted as such by another. That is why Truth enjoins on all the spirit of toleration as "we all see Truth in fragments and from different angles of vision."

> Ahimsa or non-violence, [says Gandhi] is no wooden or lifeless dogma, but a living and life-giving force. It is an attribute of the brave, in fact, it is their all. It is the special attribute of the soul. That is why it has been described as the highest dharma*** The Sun of Ahimsa carries

> all the hosts of darkness such as hatred, anger and malice before himself.

"Without Ahimsa, therefore, according to him, it is not possible to seek and find Truth."

> If I were asked, [says Gandhi] to define the Hindu creed, I should simply say,—'search after Truth through non-violent means.'

Non-violence is love to all living beings, the cow being the symbol of the animal kingdom, as the giver of plenty and the mother to millions of Indian mankind.[1]

To perpetuate untouchability is, therefore, to be guilty of a form of violence. The existence of untouchability among Hindus is in Gandhi's view a denial of the doctrine of *ahimsa* on which we pride ourselves. Its removal must, therefore, to be lasting, be brought about, not by Law but by rousing to action Hindu conscience, which would then remove the shame of its own accord. Thus will it be seen that love is the highest form of non-violence—and constitutes the basis of human relationship. It is killed by fear or cowardice. There is not one amongst the religions in the world that does not make non-violence obligatory, though at times they may make violence permissible but as we advance, even that permissibility must be curtailed and abolished. Violence may be better than cowardice, but non-violence is better than violence. And non-violence involves self-suffering. That suffering, to be purposeful, should be pure. The intensity of suffering gains in proportion to its purity and its effectiveness grows in proportion to its intensity. It

[1] This subject is treated at length in the appendix.

is thus that out of love we welcome persecution, excommunication, deprivation of family property and prestige. Not to retaliate under such circumstance requires *yama* and *dama*, or self-restraint. But self-restraint cannot be a passive force or factor at that. It must activate itself through a thousand services performed, and service when intensive, variegated and continuous, involves sacrifice. This principle of sacrifice which is enjoined on all and is constantly kept before one's vision in the form of *Mantrams* which people utter in the Mornings and Evenings before they eat, has, in course of time, become mechanical when it ought to have been symbolical. Five small lumps of food are set apart by the Hindus morning and evening before one eats and they are dedicated to Dharma, Dharmaraja, Chitra, Chitragupta and Sarvadevas.[2] This takes place after the first "*Parishechanam*" "परिषेचन" and before taking the food. It is meant to kindle the observance of a spirit of charity and helpfulness in the discharge of the day's duties.

In this view the indulgence in sensual pleasures as well as the accumulation of wealth stand on a par as unworthy objects and undesirable activities. Physical labour—whether you are a weaver or a spinner, a karmik or a karshak, a cobbler or a scavenger, becomes obligatory on every man, while spinning represents the simplest and purest form of labour. It becomes;

[2] धर्मायनमः श्रों
धर्मराजयनमः श्रों
चित्रायनमः श्रों
चित्रगुप्तायनमः श्रों
सर्वदेवेभ्योन्नमः श्रों

therefore, not only a duty but a sacrament. Your first duty then is to your village and to the village products. To support them is real swadesi. Let it not be thought that they are lacking in art or beauty, for the highest art is not external symmetry, or beauty, but something which is internal,—the beauty that is Truth, the Truth that is non-violence, the non-violence that is love, the love that helps the villager find his living through the labour of his hands. As the poet of old sang: "Beauty is Truth and Truth is beauty and this is all ye know and all ye need to know on earth."

> All true Art, [says Gandhi] must help the soul, to realize its inner self and we realize our soul and self when our fellow creatures live in happiness and we help them to that end in howsoever small a measure.

If these views are accepted the very system of education in the country must become altered. Indigenous culture should be the means by which the youthful mind is informed. Then alone would be possible a harmonious correlation of the culture of the head, the hand and the heart.

> An academic grasp without practice behind it, [says Gandhi] is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look at, but nothing to inspire or ennoble.

Lacking in these elements, "English Education," according to him, "has put a severe strain upon the Indian student's nervous energy and has made of us imitators." The process of displacing the vernaculars has been one of the saddest chapters. One's language implies and includes love of one's religion which in turn implies equal respect for other religions because they too are manifestations of truth.

When all these basal principles are acknowledged it will be readily recognized that Satyagraha is only a manifestation of the Sanatana Dharma. It simply means holding on to truth, truth-force or Soul-force in contrast with brute-force. Truth is the basis of society and Satyagraha is the firm holding on to Truth so that Untruth may be resisted, holding on to Light so that Darkness may be resisted, holding on to Life so that Death may be resisted. Thus Truth stands arrayed against all tyranny—whether that tyranny is of the State or of society or of the individual. To the extent to which Satyagraha resists evil, it knows no defeat, for suffering is the avenue by which the objective is reached and suffering when continuous and marked may look like failure. But it is only preliminary to success. That suffering may sometimes end in death does not abate its value. Let it be remembered however, that Satyagraha guarantees always safety to others and invites suffering only on oneself. You dare not compel other to follow even Satyagraha, for that would be tyranny and the ruin of the cause to boot. Excommunication and denial of social services is really a form of tyranny. We may not hobnob with the offending party but we dare not deny him social service—the service of the grocer, the barber, the dhobie, the chuckler and other village artisans and craftsmen. Gandhi is clear that we should not countenance social boycott of one who may not abide by the award in an arbitration to which originally he is a willing party.

> We may not take part in his social functions [says he] such as marriage feasts, we may not receive gifts from him. But we dare not deny social service.

A Satyagrahi has no enemies.

The way to discovery of Truth is by *fasting and prayer*. The great sages and saints have set the pace and the tone for us. Non-co-operation, Passive Resistance, Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha are but phases of the search for truth. Non-Co-operation when consummated becomes pure love. It pervades life and knows no compartments. Politics in its eye is religion and religion in its eye is politics. It acts openly and abhors secrecy. It casts off fear and speaks the truth and defies governments civilly. But only those who observe disciplines and obey laws are qualified to disobey a stated law as Satyagrahis. It is wrong for people to apprehend that Civil Disobedience leads to chaos which is caused only by criminal disobedience. But it is not criminal disobedience that the Satyagrahi practises, for his Satyagraha is rooted in love which implies orderliness and fellowship. Accordingly one qualified Satyagrahi is enough to root out evil. Civil Resistance when non-violent becomes unfailing in results and insurmountable by evil. Only the leader should know his place and should not allow himself to be dictated to by the mob. Growth based on such a scheme may be at times slow, at times sudden. The seeds of evolution as well as revolution lie embedded in Satyagraha. We in India are passing through the *Kali Yug* to the *Kritha Yug* which is the *golden age* of a long bygone past as well as of the near future. The transition will not be kaleidoscopic in its suddenness. We can pass to the *Kritha Yug* or *Satya Yug* only through Satyagraha and it is our sole salvation.

PART I

CHAPTER I

GANDHI AND HIS PERSONALITY

I

If the noblest study of man-kind is man, that study must be all the more ennobled which scans and scrutinizes the life and character of one who is easily and admittedly the noblest, not merely amongst his contemporaries but amongst his forbears as well. Usually, we love to deify our great men and surround them with a halo of mystery or mysticism or both, exalt them to heights which are inaccessible to us and then sing hallelujahs in their praise after they have departed from their scene of action. With Gandhi it is wholly different. The poet may have sung that "the paths of glory lead but to the grave," but Gandhi's paths of glory have become manifest to his fellow-men during his life-time and before they are encrusted by supernatural tradition gathering round his name and memory, his marvels and miracles. Gandhi lays no pretensions to perfection. He is of the earth earthy,—and of the heaven heavenly.

His Personality

Gandhi ~~is~~ was born a common man and has grown to be a superman. He has gathered his following not by accumulating wealth but by renouncing it, not by

propounding any new philosophies but by practising old ones, not by being ministered unto, but by ministering unto man on earth. His is the simple doctrine of positivism, his is the sublime way of living, plain in style and high of purpose. Gandhi is the farmer and weaver, who has once again rekindled love in the human breast, rehabilitated the freedom of man and restored under his teaching the dignity of human labour. All inequalities between continent and continent, community and community and sex and sex shall vanish, for they no longer exist within his ken and if they existed he would rather be the meanest of the mean and weep with them that wept than take his place with the high and mighty, and rejoice with them that rejoiced. "The impact of his personality upon others is itself a creative energy" as Prof. Mac Murray puts it and "transforms their outlook and heightens their capacity." People have called him, off and on, a mystic or a statesman, a pacifist or a democrat, a social revolutionary or a reactionary conservative, a moral quack or a perverse crank, a saint or a savage, a Jehovah, Jove or Lord, a Messiah, Paigambar, Rasul or Vali. But whatever he is or is not, the fact remains that in an age, torn asunder by war and bloodshed, in a world where the rule of the jungle has prevailed and vilolence has been enthroned as the basis of internal (intra-national) order as well as the arbiter of international disputes, in a form of society where law has superseded public opinion and conscience as the supreme sanction, and installed brute-force as the very foundation of all *order*, he has helped to restore faith once again in a sense of *amour propre*, and in the supreme authority of the *Zamir* or inner voice in man through the doctrine of love and service, of suffering and sacrifice. His labours for the good of humanity

have embraced such a wide field that people ask, "Is Gandhi a philosopher or a saint, a social reformer or a scientist, an economist or a politician, a propounder of dharma or the leader of a fight?" While seemingly his methods appear detached and even disjointed, it is only the lapse of a little time or acute prescience that would enable one to see the vital and organic, yea, the scientific relationship between the different items of his programme which make up a harmonious whole, a perfected scheme.

His Teachings

By Gandhi's teachings, the inebriate has become abstemious. Through his benediction the harlot has become a housewife. Under his direction, the drone has become a labourer. His one act of renunciation has ennobled poverty, his one whisper has emancipated the slave, his one breath has transformed woman from goods and chattel into a sentient being and a responsible member of society. He is a cosmopolitan but is primarily a Hindu. He is a social reformer but is essentially a conservative. He is for rural resuscitation but is not a pilgrim back to primitive faith. He loves the village but does not hate the town. He battles with Britain but befriends the Britisher. He abhors all sin but never antagonizes the sinner.

Freedom to Gandhi is not a licence to the strong to exploit the resources of the weak, freedom is the passport to every citizen, the charter that allows him to think out his thoughts openly and work out his themes without let or hindrance. Like all charters, freedom too doth impose its own conditions, for freedom has its own limitations. Your freedom ends where your

neighbour's begins. It is this recognition of your neighbour's right or in other words of your own duty to him that constitutes the foundation of non-violence, and makes it a positive force, not a mere negation. Such a recognition brings new values into society, economics and politics. Accordingly, purity is no more merely sanitary than dignity is sartorial. Nobility is no more of birth than greatness is of wealth. Power is no more of arms than influence is of authority. Democracy is no more of numbers than justice is of law. Civilization is no more of tradition than culture is of knowledge. Salvation is no more of Heaven than wisdom is of Earth. Religion is no more of ceremonies than prayer is of words. Piety is no more of asceticism than learning is of pedantry. Leadership is no more of vote than Government is of dictation.

His make-up

Gandhi's make-up is wholly religious and ethical and his economics are but the logical outcome of such a make-up. He is noble because he is generous to all. His power is acclaimed on all hands because his influence arises from the concord between his philosophy and his daily conduct. He is essentially a believer in the masses but believes in serving them, not exploiting them for self-aggrandizement. His sense of justice revolts against the conventions of law and is fundamentally based upon the ethics of social relationship. He is devoted to India's ancient civilization, but is not hidebound by its conventions. His cultural equipment is not any vastness or profundity of knowledge but the chastening of spirit which heredity and environment exercise upon man. He does not flee from this

work-a-day world with its madding crowds, but identifies himself with the poorest person amongst them in order to uplift him. He is deeply religious but neither the thrikala *Sandhyavandan* nor the *Panch Namaz* nor the Sunday services constitute his prayers. He worships his one God in spirit and Truth and through the service of his creation. He has led mankind not because of a plebiscite taken from door to door and citizen to citizen but by the voluntary and whole-souled allegiance of his fellowmen to his teachings. He has led people to the sacrifices he enjoined on them and never directed them to march onward from a safe corner in the rear.

A Mahatma

Gandhi is a Mahatma. The name that has been applied is not an accident. It is a *Sardhaka Nam*, an *ism ba musammé*. We all know that almost every day we have two selves in us—the higher and the baser,—the Hyde and the Jekyll. In addition, we have one *self*, living in the conscious world and another living in the subconscious world. More than one state of consciousness has been described as well as experienced. When we emerge from a dream in which we are subject to the full play of emotions—the very same that overpower us in our conscious state, we realize that we have been all the while functioning on a subconscious plane. If this is a fact of experience it must be equally easy for us to realize or visualize that a superconscious state also is possible and is enjoyed by men of purity, unselfishness, detachment and universal love. That is the privilege of a *Mahatma* or a *jivan muktha*, the emancipated soul or the liberated life. That is how his word of mouth is the Law to millions, his silence is as potent

a mentor and monitor as his pen or voice. His sharp look *xrays* your heart and explores its virtues and vices. His upraised finger hushes all noise into pin-drop silence. His toothless smile fills the whole atmosphere with a new glow and an ineffable glory.

His radiant countenance sheds an unfading lustre upon his environment.

Gandhi is one of those *avathars* who descend on earth in order to purify the world and rid it of its dross. They come to it both as its correctives and conservers. They are intensely and intimately related to their surroundings and live and work as men amongst their fellowmen, complete their term of ministry, fulfil their mission and are absorbed into that eternity from which they have emerged to punish vice and protect virtue.

II

It is a truism to say that a great man is the product of his times. Raja Ram Mohun Roy's faith and philosophy, his culture and achievement were the result of the closer intercourse established between the East and the West in the first quarter of the last century. A half century after his death was born another great personage, a prophet of Indian Nationalism and world culture whose thoughts must have been moulded by the South African war and the horrors of the great European war of 1914-1918. President Wilson dreamed of a new world. Tolstoy and Kropotkin had already written much about it. The sight of horrors oftentimes raises a revolt against them but they are soon forgotten and what is worse, human nature tends to relapse into them. Gandhi, however, has not let the grass grow under his feet. His whole

effort in life is to set an object lesson to humanity learnt by the bitter experience of one's own life,—from events taking place before one's very eyes.

Character is the reaction of a person to his surroundings. Does he find a jewel on the road and hand it over to the police, or notice a scorpion and avoid killing it or watch a suffering animal or a brother in distress and play to them the good Samaritan ? Character is not an attainment which has a limit or a perfection. It grows with age and may be burnished by every act of ours. Character is apt to rust like a metal on contact with tarnishing materials and therefore must avoid them or react upon them to neutralize their corroding and corrupting qualities. In a word it must combat its environment day in, day out.

Social Order

Indeed human conduct is the resultant of various forces, acting and reacting upon life of which we are the centre,—the pivot and fulcrum. The combined results of such resultants shape what we call society or the social order. When a new cult is started, it is really a change of emphasis, a shifting of the centre of gravity. Movements beginning with certain definite aims grow into quite different cults. The transformation in conduct of untruth to Truth, or death to life, or darkness to light, cannot take place along any set rails, shuntings, sidings, pointers and lever rods. The course is rather of a motor car taking a zigzag course along the road. Indeed, this is the reason why each new school of thought, compact and closely knit in its composition and functioning, gives rise, ere long, to schisms and sections, some adhering to the original tenets, others

digressing widely from them. Take Lenin and Trotsky and Stalin. Take the boycott of Councils, colleges and courts and then the programme of Council entry, office acceptance and resignation. The observations of Count Herman Keyserling on the point are worth quoting—

> The definite ideas attached to definite movements matter little, and they are always misleading; for, firstly each of them contains and unifies many more components than is indicated by the name given to it, and secondly the real power behind a 'name and form' has in the long run, as all history shows, very little in common with the latter. A movement, which began its career with one definite aim in view, always grew, as life proceeded, into something different. Accordingly, I do not, in the very least, believe in the accuracy of any of the current designations for world movements; no nation in the world really means what it says, when pretending to struggle for Democracy or Socialism or Freedom or Godlessness. In reality all of them grope in the dark for a goal as yet unknown to them, which will reveal its final outlines only after the embryo, that each is now, not only has been born but has grown up. And no single one of the causes that men fight for in our days, can possibly achieve final victory; the world of man being divided into gigantic fields of tension, centres of formidable power, only a harmonized synthesis of all that survives—a distant synthesis very difficult to reach,—will eventually produce a relatively stable equilibrium.

III

No one need pause to ask whether Gandhi is a gnostic or agnostic, whether he believes in a personal or impersonal God, whether he has faith in individual or congregational worship, whether his religion is based on *Bhakthi*, *jnana* or *karma*. He has sublimated his *jnan* into *bhakthi* and he has materialized his *bhakthi* into *karma*. It is this reconciliation that has made

Gandhi's character organic and therefore ever so highly prized.

> It signifies [as John Morley points out] a harmony between the intellectual, the moral and the practical parts of human nature,—an undisturbed co-operation between reason, affection and will,—reason prescribing nothing against which the affections revolt and proscribing nothing which they crave and the will obeying the joint impulses of these two forces.

Gandhi carries his heart in his hand, his faith is reflected in every one of his acts and sayings—his *afaal* and *aqual*. He has neither published his Veda nor his Quran but his *hadis* is available to his contemporaries as well as to posterity. The person that has renounced property and subdued passions, has conquered all enemies whether outside or inside. He, therefore, who has conquered desire has no ambitions to entertain and therefore no fears to reckon. Fear is but the obverse of the picture of that passion of which the reverse is desire. Gandhi lives for others. Society is Gandhi's temple, service is his sole form of worship, humanity is his single passion. Truth is his one God and non-violence is his only means of attaining it. His appeal is to the universal of which the local forms an integral factor.

Gandhism is not a set of doctrines or dogmas, rules or regulations, injunctions or inhibitions, but it is a way of life. It indicates a new attitude or restates an old one towards life's issues and offers "ancient solutions for modern problems."

> A new way of life [as Sir S. Radhakrishnan says] must become the foundation of national being as well as of world order, a way of life which will conserve and foster the true interests of all classes, races and nations. It is the freed men,

> who have liberated themselves from submission to the blind, selfish will of avidya, that can work for and establish peace. Peace is a positive demonstration in life and behaviour of certain universal principles and standards. We must fight for them by weapons, which do not involve the debasement of moral values or the destruction of human life. In this effort, we must be ready to endure whatever suffering comes our way.

How then shall we study Gandhism? To study it, one must only study the life and achievement of Gandhi, understand his doubts and difficulties, appreciate his outlook and points of view. You cannot say "शाठ्येन शठं जयेत" that you will conquer evil with evil. "Overcome evil with good," says the Sermon on the Mount, "Do good unto them that do evil unto thee, judge not that ye be not judged, forgive them that offend against thee." Our Ithihasas are equally emphatic on the point. "He must not do any evil in return for an evil done, but be always good and kind to him, for a wicked person willing to do any evil to any one is killed by himself."[1]

These are the cardinal principles common alike to the Christian and the Hindu, and applicable to all times and countries, all conditions, and circumstances, all spheres of life and strata of society. Every saying of Gandhi, every act of his, every approval or condemnation by him of others' sayings and doings,—these constitute the guidance to one, who would study Gandhism.

> If only all these '*isms*', [as Babu Bhagavandas puts it] would shed their 'extremism' and take in, instead, a little genuine spiritual Religion and a few psychological principles, they would be at once shaking hands with each other or even running into each other's arms. All these ideologies and

[1] Mahabharata Vanaparva. 206-42.3.

isms have great things to their credit, all have great crimes to their debit too.

IV

We have studied Gandhi in outline. We must proceed to examine Gandhism in detail. *Ism* means a name. Gandhism then means the *name* of Gandhi and Gandhi and his name stand for nothing, if they do not stand for definite principles and policies. These really constitute the philosophy for which Gandhi stands and what is meant by Gandhism is that philosophy which has shaped his life and character, his work and achievements, his gospel and teachings.

The term "Gandhism" has become widely popular. Almost the first time the term was used was on the occasion of the address given by Gandhi at Karachi soon after the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations were concluded, at a public meeting which had taken place even prior to the Congress session, when Gandhi made a remarkable statement that "*Gandhi may die but Gandhism will live for ever*." Apparently, he then and there coined the term *Gandhism* as an expression which, succinctly but comprehensively, summarizes the philosophy that underlies his cult of truth and non-violence. Gandhi himself had told the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh at Saoli in March 1936 as follows:

> There is no such thing as 'Gandhism', and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine, I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems...The opinions I have formed and the conclusions I have arrived at are not final. I may change them tomorrow. I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to

> try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could do. In doing so I have sometimes erred and learnt by my errors. Life and its problems have thus become to me so many experiments in the practice of truth and non-violence. By instinct I have been truthful, but not non-violent...In fact it was in the course of my pursuit of truth that I discovered non-violence...Well, all my philosophy, it may be called by that pretentious name, is contained in what I have said. You will not call it 'Gandhism'; there is no *ism* about it.

Those who would pursue the trends of Gandhi's Philosophy should observe certain cardinal principles which have been compendiously described by Sri Kishorelal G. Mashurwalla, the President of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, as being imperatively necessary to those who have at heart the attainment of the country's freedom—

1. Devotion to life of service,
2. Possession of stern character and purpose,
3. Self-control and discipline and aversion to a life of frivolity and pleasure-seeking,
4. Greatest simplicity, poverty and hardship and readiness for physical exertion.

Nor has Gandhi ever set himself up as a teacher or guru and ever spoken of his disciples. "I have no disciples," said he, "being myself an aspirant after discipleship and in search of a guru." But it must be admitted that no great teacher has ever set up such claims.

Whether Gandhi has or has not set up claims for himself, the fact remains that his position as the acknowledged founder of a new world order is undeniable and the world cannot be got to ignore the fact that Gandhi and Gandhism are factors of human progress with unlimited potentialities.

Gandhi's great teachings relate to Truth and Non-violence.

> Indeed the acid test of non-violence, [said he] is that one thinks, speaks and acts non-violently, even when there is the gravest provocation to be violent. There is no merit in being non-violent to the good and the gentle. Non-violence is the mightiest force in the world capable of resisting the greatest imaginable temptation. Jesus knew 'the generation of vipers,' minced no words in describing them, but pleaded for mercy for them before the Judgment Throne, 'for they knew not what they were doing.' I gave the company chapter and verse in support of the statements I made. I regard myself as a friend of the Missionaries. I enjoy happy relations with many of them. But my friendships have never been blind to the limitations of my friends or the systems or methods they have supported. False notions of propriety or fear of wounding susceptibilities often deter people from saying what they mean and ultimately land them on the shores of hypocrisy. But if non-violence of thought is to be evolved in individuals or societies or nations, truth has to be told, however harsh or unpopular it may appear to be for the moment. And mere non-violent action without the thought behind it is of little value. It can never be infectious. It is almost like a whited sepulchre. Thought is the power and the life behind it. We hardly know that thought is infinitely greater than action or words. When there is correspondence between thought, word and deed, either is a limitation of the second. Needless to say that here I am referring to the living thought which awaits translation into speech and action. Thoughts without potency are airy nothings and end in smoke.

The Great Reconciliation

While the various *isms* that have come into being, stand arrayed against one another dividing man from man and nation from nation, Gandhism, we claim, has helped to harmonize the conflicts incidental to them all and attempted a reconciliation of the cardinal principles of Socialism, Communism, Fascism and Universalism. It is in pursuit of this great reconciliation that

Gandhi has put in already a ministry of over a quarter of a century, and during this fairly long period he has attained appreciable results, a following in numbers the like of which it was not given to the propounders of earlier philosophies or the founders of earlier religions to secure in their own lifetime and before their very eyes. We divide these philosophies and religions broadly as Eastern and Western or sometimes as ancient and modern.

They are, however, generally a mixture of both and are exclusively not the one or the other, for every new philosophy is charged with the aroma of its predecessor and therefore gains considerably in force and popularity. In other words, may we not say every philosophy has a centre and a circumference and likewise Gandhi's. His centre is essentially Indian, his circumference is Western or even cosmopolitan. Gandhism is not a new cult. It is an old philosophy which had shaped centuries ago, the socio-economic structure of the Hindus in strict conformity with those eternal principles of religion and ethics for which the Hindu Dharma had always stood. Gandhi has only rediscovered, as in a flash of inspiration, the whole plan of this ancient structure and the way it could be made once more to function under modern conditions. Gandhism may not be new but it is original, for, all originality is either an invention or a discovery. In other words, it is the propagation of a new thought or of an old thought in a new garb. There are many who have preached temperance and prohibition, not a few who have raised slogans of swadesi and boycott, a large number of leaders who have voiced forth the clarion call of "back to the land" or "back to the village;" there have been missionaries, who have dec-

laimed against caste and communal discords and the perpetuation of untouchability. But where is the man who has conceived, with the plan and purpose of an architect before his mind's eye, the edifice of Indian nationalism in which all God's creation shall have equal rights and opportunities, equal status and position up to a certain irreducible minimum,—an edifice indeed reared on the solid and abiding foundation of the Indian village, self-conscious, self-contained, self-reliant and self-complete, and inhabited by people, who are bound together by ties of goodwill and amity, peace and fellowship? The Sermon on the Mount is contained in the Gospels and is preached from week to week amongst the Christian nations of the earth, the world over, but these very nations are engaged in a campaign of mutual slaughter carried out by the highest flights of modern, scientific achievement, in order to appropriate the wide spaces under the Sun for one or another and starve the rest of mankind. It has been left to Gandhi *to preach that religion is not a Sunday show* but an hourly, minutely, mentor and monitor, operating on every one of man's activities, and guiding him from within, not merely pressed into service as a dope taken for the nonce but always regarded as a constituent factor of the physical, mental and moral tissues of humanity.

When swadesi was preached as a retaliative measure against the partition of Bengal, the mainspring of action and thought was a feeling of hatred of the foreigner, as much as a love of one's own country. But that *Country* was a vague, intangible idea. It did not mean a personal contact of the English educated classes with the masses, an approach by the town with a programme of socio-economic amelioration

of the people and professions of the villages. The weaver was doubtless benefited by the cult, but the spinner was left alone; the handicraft was sought to be encouraged, but the insidious tyranny of the machine which sought to stifle the tools and the skill of the craftsman was not only left untouched but was allowed to supersede the needs of the indigent villager. Our antipathy to Britain was so marked that we proclaimed from house-tops a boycott of British Goods. It was the loss to the former as much as gain to ourselves that constituted the moving passion. The constructive side of nationalism was but faintly visible, the spectacular side of destruction was the prime mover of the agitation. The vision before the people was not of a nation wedded to its own ideals, reconstructed on principles hoary with age and sanctified by tradition. The best amongst us were, after the onset of the new movement that followed in the wake of the Bengal Partition, still dazzled by the radiance of Western knowledge and were too, if they did not openly proclaim their faith from tower and beach, at least secretly longing in their hearts for position and preferment under the patronage of the foreigner. When, therefore, Gandhi reached India in 1915, he found the affiliations of the country and the Congress divided between those that swore loyalty to the British under Gokhale's leadership and those that under Tilak's held that the people should, render to Caesar what was Caesar's and unto God what was God's. To these a third force was added under Besant's inspiration which pleaded for the emancipation of India while not renouncing the overlordship of England. The thought was, however, nowhere expressed that this old structure of a British dependency was to be demolished, roof and walls, plinth and foundations and

rebuilt on plans and estimates altogether new, with ideals wholly oriental and indigenous so as to ensure fair accommodation to all, and adequate food and clothing and housing to every living soul. This was a new idea to those educated classes who prided themselves over their success in examinations and measured the culture of the country by the standards of University degrees, Government jobs, lucrative professions, honorary positions under the auspices of the State and above all, the decorations and titles conferred upon the people as a mark of appreciation of their loyalty. Gandhi brought a fresh mind to bear on the examination of the problem.

Gandhi interprets this new story of human life (like the orator of the Pennsylvanian university, the story of American life,)

> Not as a stirring ballad, not as a philosophic epic, but as a drama of the eternal conflict in the soul of man between self-interest in its protean forms and loyalty to the right, service to a cause, allegiance to an ideal. It may be that men tell us that the age of ideals is past and that we are now come to the age of expediency, of polite indifference to moral standards, of careful attention to the bearing of different policies upon our own personal interests. Men may tell us that the rights of man are a poetic fiction, that democracy has nothing in it to command our allegiance unless it promotes our individual comfort and prosperity, and that the whole duty of a citizen is to vote with his party and get an office for himself or for some one who will look after him. It may be that men tell us that to succeed means to get money because with that, all other good things can be secured. Men tell us that the one thing to do is to promote and protect the particular trade or industry or corporation in which we have a share; the laws of trade will work-out that survival of the fittest which is the only real righteousness, and if we survive, that will prove that we are fit. Men may tell us that all beyond this is phantasy, dreaming, Sun-

day-School politics; there is nothing worth living for except to get on in the world; and nothing at all worth dying for, since that age of ideals is past.

The age of ideals is past indeed for those, who proclaim or whisper or in their hearts believe, or in their lives obey this black gospel. And what is to follow? An age of cruel and bitter jealousies between sections and classes, of hatred and strife between the *Haves* and *Have nots*, of futile contests between parties who have kept their names and confused their principles, so that, no man can distinguish them except as the *ins* and *outs*? An age of greedy privilege and sullen poverty, of blatant luxury and curious envy, of rising palaces and vanishing homes, of stupid frivolity and idiotic publicomania in which 400 gilded fools give monkey dinners and Louis XV revels, while 4 million gossips gape at them and read about them in the newspapers? An age when princes of finance buy protection from representatives of a fierce democracy, when guardians of the savings which insure the lives of the poor—use them as a surplus to pay for the extravagance of the rich and when men who have climbed above their fellows on golden ladders tremble at the crack of blackmailer's whip and come down at the call of an obscene newspaper? An age when the python of political corruption casts its "rings" about the neck of proud cities and sovereign states, and throttles liberty and honesty into submission? It is such an age, dark, confused, shameful that sceptics and the scorner must face when they turn their backs upon those ancient shrines where the flames of faith and integrity and devotion are flickering like the deserted altar fires of a forsaken worship. But not for us, who claim our heritage in blood and spirit from our ancient Rishis and the men who stood with them, who have learned the meaning of manhood beneath the shelter of liberty, not for us, nor for our country that dark apostasy, that dismal outlook. We see the Palladium of the ancient Indian ideal—goddess of the just eye, the unpolluted heart, the equal hand. We see the heroes of the present conflict, the men whose allegiance is not to sections but to the whole people, the fearless champions of fair play. We believe that the liberties, which the heroes of old won with blood and sacrifice, are

ours to keep with labour and service and

> All that our fathers wrought
> With true prophetic thought
> Must be defended.

No privilege that encroaches upon these is to be endured. No lawless disorder that imperils them is to be sanctioned. No class that disregards or invades them is to be tolerated. There is a life that is worth living now, as it was worth living in the former days and that is the honest life. There is a battle that is worth fighting for, and that is the battle for food and clothing—for the elementary rights of the people. To make our people free, in fact, as well as in name, to break the strings that strangle real liberty and to keep them broken, to cleanse, so far as in our power lies, the fountain of our national life from political, commercial and social corruption, to teach our sons and daughters by precept and example the honour of serving such a country as Hindusthan, that is work worthy of the finest manhood and womanhood. The well-born are those who are born to do that work. The well-bred are those who are bred to be proud of that work. The well-educated are those who understand the meaning and necessity of that work. Nor shall their labour be for naught, nor the reward of their sacrifice be denied. For high in the firmament of human destiny are set the stars of faith in mankind and unselfish courage and loyalty to the ideal and while these shine, the spirit and the hope of the Rishis and the men who stood with them shall never, never die.

V

The precepts of Gandhi are nowhere catalogued, but Stephen Hobhouse has catalogued them in some measure, taking them all from the lips or the pen of the great leader.

1. Ahimsa ('harmlessness' or non-violence) means the largest love. It is the supreme law. By it alone, can mankind be saved.

2. He who believes in non-violence, believes in a living God.

3. Non-violence cannot be taught by word of mouth. It is kindled in our heart by the grace of God, in answer to earnest prayer.

4. Non-violence is the weapon of the strongest and the bravest. The true man of God has the strength to use the sword, but will not use it, knowing that every man is the image of God.

5. If blood be shed, let it be our blood, cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing.

6. Love does not burn others, it burns itself suffering joyfully even unto death. It will do no intentional injury in thought, word, or deed, to the person of a single Englishman.

7. India must conquer her so-called conquerors by love. For us, patriotism is the same as the love of humanity. I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India.

8. Non-violence and Truth (SATYA) are inseparable and presuppose one another.

9. There is no God higher than Truth. Truth is the first thing to be sought for.

10. In our holy war, which is directed by God Himself, there are no secrets to be guarded, there is no scope for cunning, no place for untruth. All is done openly in the face of the enemy.

11. Satyagraha (truth-force or soul-force) requires the control, by the prayer of purity, of all bodily and self-regarding desires.

12. In every step that he takes the Satyagrahi (he who practises truth-force) is bound to consider the needs of his adversary. He is ever gentle and courteous to him, though he will not obey unrighteous laws or commands.

13. The Satyagrahi will not swerve from the path of justice, but he is always eager for peace. He has abundant faith in others, infinite patience, and ample hope.

14. Human nature is in its essence one, and therefore the

aggressor unfailingly responds (that is in the end) to the advances of love.

15. No power on earth can stand before the march of a peaceful, determined, and God-fearing people. Non-violence is more powerful than all the armaments in the world.

16. To the God-fearing, death has no terrors.

17. Bravery on the battle-field is impossible for us. But fearlessness is absolutely necessary the abandonment of all fear of bodily injury, of disease or death, of the loss of possessions of family, or of reputation. Nothing in this world is ours.

18. Ahiṃsa requires true humility, for it is reliance not on self, but on God alone.

PART II

CHAPTER II

NON-VIOLENCE

I

Every new invention or discovery looks infinitely easy after it has been devised or disinterred. How simple it is to say that dirt cannot be removed by dirt or to ask, "How can Satan reprove Satan or violence remedy violence?" It is non-violence that must set right the vagaries of violence for if violence could do it, our progress in the direction of curing the ills of society must be along an ever ascending graph of violence and more violence to cure the lesser violence. The movement will be along an endless linear course or an ever-recurring vicious circle. The elimination of Force is not attempted for the first time by Gandhi, for there have been others like Ignatius Loyola of the society of Jesus wedded to principles of celibacy and freedom from desire and attachment.

Indeed the list of those who laboured for the cause of progress and truth in the world, and therefore of direct or indirect apostles of non-violence, is a long and varied one. The greatest teachers and exemplars of Non-violence, Parsva, Buddha, Mahavir, Lau Tsu, Jesus Christ, Paul of Tarsus, Peter Waldo, Wycliffe, Huss, Menno, Sinons, George Fox, John Woolman, William Penn, Thoreau, Tolstoy,—all are profoundly religious. The names of Tolstoy and Prince Kroptkin who

had already laid the basis of non-violence in Russia, and of Ruskin, Thoreau and Edward Carpenter are familiar to most people in India. There are names equally familiar, such as those of Brother Giles and John Woolman, Michael Coates, the Quaker, James Nayler of the 17th century who was punished for blasphemy; names too, of mystics who have cried in the wilderness like Jakob Behme and his English disciple, William Law, Peter Chelchizki of the 15th century—the forerunner of Tolstoy and of various Anabaptist and Quakersaints, and of martyrs like Socrates, Guiardino Bruno and Servetus. Germany presents a whole band of workers who worked on the lines of Tolstoy and Kroptkin,—namely, Kurt Eisner, Gustav Landauer, Car Von Ossietzky, Erich Mihsan and Theodre Lessing. In addition we have elsewhere the names of Alfred Wallace, Washington Koscinsko, Lafayette, Clarkson, Wilberforce, David Lloyd Garrison and Abraham Lincoln. Above all there are the world celebrities—St. Francis of Assisi, "who led a simple and poor life in harmony with creation" and St. Thomas Aquinas—thinker and philosopher. To this long roll of saints and prophets, we add the name of Gandhi.

Scope for Experiments

The peculiar conditions of India as a subject nation gave an extensive and sustained scope for the experiments of Gandhi in this direction which it has not been possible for votaries of any particular religious denomination in the past to pursue. There is, however, a general rise in the level of thought on lines of non-violence in the present age. The *lunatic asylum* has given

place to the *mental hospital*, the *jails* are called *penitentiaries*, *juvenile offenders* are put in *Reformatories*. *Punishment* has given place to *prevention*. *Therapeutics* is now subordinated to *public hygiene*. *Criminal tribes* are now re-educated and brought up anew in settlements. These are isolated endeavours for treating crime—not as fit only for punishment but as worthy of better care based upon love and constructive effort. Even as we re-educate the lunatic and the criminal, so too must we re-educate the war-lords, the greedy kings, the vindictive rulers, the angry brother, the revengeful husband, the refractory child. Gandhi has bracketed them all and brought them under the operation of a new science, a new law—the law of love, a new philosophy—the philosophy of non-violence.

If true religion is a heart grasp not a brain one, it cannot be alien to anyone but must be evolved by each out of himself as it is always within us all. Truth, ahimsa, and self-restraint—these are the broad tenets to be observed by every follower of Gandhi. Ahimsa is not a negative attitude but a positive act. It is not merely abstinence from a "tit for tat" or "an eye for an eye" and "a tooth for a tooth." It is the doctrine of overcoming evil with good and doing good unto those who do evil unto you; of forgiving them that trespass against you, and giving your coat unto him that stealeth your cloak. This implies that there is no retaliation, no harbouring of resentment, no intrigue, no vengeance, no organized war or secret murder,—in a word, no violence in thought, word or deed; and finally no loss of temper. All this seems superhuman, but the practice of a difficult exercise whether in gymnastics, or trigonometry or ethics, promotes your sense of confidence, augments

your joy and enhances your spiritual power. It fills you with shame and sorrow every time you fail and with faith and fervour, every time you succeed. Here truly may it be said that nothing succeeds like success and equally, nothing fails like failure.

Violence as any act, motive, thought, active feeling or outwardly directed attitude which is devisive in nature or result in respect to emotions or inner attitude; that is to say, inconsistent with spiritual unity. This would include intellectual and moral violence, include e.g., pride, scorn, contempt, anger, impatience, grumbling, spite, indignation as well as killing, wounding, frightening, exploiting, deceiving, poisoning, tempting to evil, flattering, deliberate weakening of character and so on. A non-violent resister is constantly constructing and creating sound and fine conditions. This is purification.

Non-violence is no dead abstraction, no unreal sentiment, but a living and operative virtue in the heart and moral nature of men. It enlivens the dullest soul with an ideal out of and beyond itself, lifting every faculty to a higher intellect with a fealty to something better than self. It emancipates men from petty and personal interests to make them conscious of sympathies whose society ennobles. Life has a deeper meaning when its throb beats time to a common impulse and catches its motion from the general heart.

Non-violence is both a science and art. Like all sciences it has a history and a philosophy behind it. It is not an invention of the age, it is a discovery which has been resuscitated from the debris of violence and materialism, of rage and passion, of hatred and competition by which it has been covered over for centuries. Saints and seers have sprung up from time

to time and tried to unearth this treasure-trove, to exhume this ancient relic of civilization. But it has been left to Gandhi to recover it, and then to burnish it and present it as a shining light to generations of men and women, to nations and continents sunk in the mire of greed and anger, vengeance and destruction.

The Alphabet of Non-violence

Like all sciences and arts that of non-violence has its alphabet. You cannot pass your entrance because your parents have graduated in the university. A trained sensibility is sometimes inherited in respect of an Art. The son of a musician or singer flies into ecstacies of music, instrumental or vocal, almost from his third year. But a science has to be studied. If a person with no ear for music hears in it nothing but a form of sound, or with no taste for painting, sees in it no more than streaks and splashes of colour, or with no aptitude for poetry, finds in it bad grammar and perverted idiom, you cannot accept the criticism as an honest attempt to appraise the respective arts in rhyme or rhythm, in colour or sound. You might as well take rose-water to one suffering from nasal polypoids or fire a gun in the ears of the deaf-mute or unfold a work of beauty before the congenital-blind. Notwithstanding all natural defects or artificial defections, there lies, embedded in the instinct of man, a certain sensibility, if not power, of appreciation of the arts of culture. It requires to be trained and trimmed in order that it may rise to the height of its potentialities. Growth in nature is apt to be wild or stunted. The aid of man and his conscious effort, his powers of cultivation and manuring, weeding and watering, selec-

tion of seed and rotation of crop,—all these are necessary in order to ensure a fuller and better yield. Non-violence has suffered rude shocks of criticism, yea, wild imprecations at the hands of men whose whole training in life, inherited bias and environmental suggestion has been in the opposite direction.

The child of one year, knowing no fear, catches the scorpion by the tail, and lays its hands on the jumping frog or the creeping ant. When it is beaten or teased by its elder brother, the parents pretend to give a slap on the back of the offender and gratify the incipient love of retaliation in the baby. You witness two grown-up boys in the street settling their quarrel on the way by measuring their strength against each other. The teacher canes the student that goes late to school or plays mischief with his fellow in the class. The father punishes the son that fails in his examination. The husband abuses and beats the wife that happens to cook his food late, the wife in turn beats the children, the children are cross with the maid-servant who picks up a quarrel with the master and the gamut of anger feeding itself in a vicious circle is completed. The magistrate punishes the pick-pocket and on return from jail the juvenile offender commits housebreaking and theft in the very magistrate's house and develops into the full-blown criminal. Whole gangs of men and women are rounded up and labelled a criminal tribe and are held under custody from which they break away at nights and on detection they are imprisoned. The term of punishments hardens them by contact with the "black caps" with whom they form new combinations and groups and plan all-province crimes. Finally, crimes culminate in murder and murder is visited with hanging and thus in an endless chain of progress, crime

and punishment feed each other and force has become the accepted principle of law and order.

II

The distinction between *Himsa* and *Ahimsa* is really of ancient origin, traceable back to the days of Rigveda and Adharvana Veda. Although the *Yajna* has been known from times immemorial and although the great kings from the time of Sri Rama had gone on with sacrifices involving loss of life, still there was a volume of opinion which ran counter to the sacrifice of animals and advocated the offering of a symbolic sacrifice of an animal made of dough or of a Pindabali. By the time of the *Upanishads*, we hear the story of Yama telling Nachiketa, a Brahmin boy that the same soul pervades the whole creation and makes the hearts of all created beings its common abode, that the vision of such a soul is attainable only by those who have never committed violence. The loss of life in *yajna* has been categorically condemned by many Rishis who laid the highest emphasis upon *Ahimsa* and *Satya*, and that category of virtues and regulations which can maintain the world on the basis of truth and right conduct has been known as *Dharma* around which the world centres. The *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* abound in stories and anecdotes, which teach the lesson of love to all. Great Rishis prevailed upon people to abandon *jeeva-himsa* at the time of sacrifices involving loss of life. The Jain literature is still more abounding in certain examples. The 22nd Teerthankara, named Neminada, inculcated the lesson of *Ahimsa* to a certain Sri Krishna, who used his influence to rid the Yajnams of their living sacrifices. The story of how Viswamitra abandoned

his kingdom, and repaired to the Himalayas for performing penance, is traced to a rebuff which his armed strength received at the hands of Vasishta with his *Mantrabala*, and Viswamitra becomes the centre of stories in which he helped to save life and foster the virtue of non-violence himself. Ahimsa is said to be the dominant key-note of the Jains, who developed a philosophy of ancient origin.

Buddha carried forward the torch of Ahimsa far and wide. Gandhi has perfected the science and art of Ahimsa, extended its scope to all activities in life and himself has attained the status of *Sthithaprajna* i.e., one who has abandoned desire and freed his mind from all worry, who receives pleasures and pains alike and is no longer subject to the passions of fear, and anger, who is completely detached and who has overcome *Rága* and *Dwésha* alike. Ahimsa is an elementary qualification equally of all the Vydics, Sannyasis, the Buddistic Bhikkus and the Jain Munis. The Mussalman Ulemah gave it as their considered opinion in 1922 that their *Shariath* advocated Ahimsa in intention, word and action but omitted "thought." Once *ahimsa* is practised, all vices disappear,—wrath and arrogance, indulgence in sensual pleasures, greed and lugubrious thoughts incidental to objectionable conversations, —five states that promote a state of intoxication which, the Jains believe, foster the spirit of Himsa. Ahimsa means perfect love by the play of which alone it is possible to enable the orderly working of the various forces in life each in its own sphere of action. To prevent their operation in this manner or to frustrate their purposes is tantamount to an act of *himsa*.

The Buddistic literature abounds in stories which illustrate the glories of Ahimsa. The story of sacrifice

narrated in the drama, Nagananda, is uplifting to a degree. In the Itihasas as well as in Manusmruti, the dictum that *Ahimsa*, as the highest of the *Dharmas*, is repeatedly emphasised and illustrated. On one occasion Dharmaraja asked Bhishma how we would reconcile the truth of this cult with that other belief that the offering of flesh in *Yajnam* propitiates the spirit of the *Pithris*. Bhishma's answer is clinching. Says he, "Ahimsa is most important to those that have abandoned the offer of meat, for they attain virtue,—as if they have performed *Aswamedha* month after month, they attain all good results." It were unnecessary to multiply these stories of ancient origin, which are taught in our schools; but we shall close this portion with the narration of a wonderful anecdote which is known as Govyághra samvádam.

The Tiger and the Cow

A certain Brahmin had a very quiet cow, yielding milk in abundance. She was the very incarnation of gentleness. While grazing in a forest, a tiger came all unawares and pounced upon her. The cow thereupon said to the tiger, "Stop, I shall become your prey but give me a little concession." The tiger enquired what it might be in utter astonishment. The cow said, "I have given birth to a young one only eight days ago. The calf is not yet able to graze. All that you want is my flesh. I shall just go to my calf, suckle it for the last time and return. If you agree to let me go, you will acquire great virtue." With this request, the cow displayed her distress over the impending helplessness of her calf. Thereupon the tiger stated, "No life that has escaped from forcible death would return in order

to die. This is outside the world's experience, nor can it be believed even if assurances are given that it would be so. I will not believe you." And the tiger illustrated his statement by quoting the story of a Brahmin who was born as a pig and would not give up that life in spite of his promise to that effect. In return the cow emphasised the fact that the world depended upon truth and gave for illustration the story of Madanalekha, the princess, who protected her honour and fulfilled her pledged word. She accordingly undertook to become food for a Rákshasa and that way, converted the latter to acceptance of *Satya* and *Ahimsa*. Thus, the tiger's heart also melted and he asked the cow, "Will you keep your word?" And the cow replied saying he alone is a *Chandala*, who utters a lie. The cow thereupon was released, went home, suckled the calf at leisure, allowed the master to draw the rest of the milk, warned the calf against the evils of bad company and against carelessness and returned to the forest. In the meantime, the tiger was roaring and romping with impatience over the delay in the cow's return. Just at this juncture, the cow approached the tiger and said, "I am surrendering myself to you, eat me and give me virtue." With these words the cow reached her head on to the tiger's mouth but the tiger became pale as he had never witnessed such a spectacle in his life, his heart melted; his mentality changed. "I never saw such an experience in creation; how can I do injury to such a life? I cannot bear the sin of it. *Satya* and *Dharma* have protected you. I cannot reconcile myself to eating you. Go." The cow repeated her request to be eaten expressing her intense satisfaction at having been permitted to go home and return after a time. This repetition completed the conversion of the tiger's heart. The

story pleased the very gods in the high heavens. When the story was repeated by the author in the Fergusson College—Poona, in answer to a student who asked this very question as to what a cow should do if a tiger came to eat her;—when this story was repeated, the student cleverly asked the question whether the British tiger would be as gentle and soft-hearted as that tiger. The simple answer given to it was that it was not the gentleness of the tiger that saved the cow, it was the complete non-violence, the whole-hearted surrender of the cow, that produced the gentleness in the tiger. If our sacrifices and surrender are as sincere, whole-hearted and untainted as that of the cow, even the British are bound to soften. Need it be added that the whole house of 2,000 students and professors expressed their acceptance of the view?

III

Non-violence has become with the Congress, *a manthram* to be uttered to preserve one's congress faith and with others it remains a supernatural power which it is not for mortals to attempt to cultivate, much less to master. Faith is the first essential to all progress. To start with doubt, is to court certain failure. Doubt kills all inspiration and an attempt devoid of inspiration simply falls flat. In all mundane matters we start with abundant faith. We know for certain that a boy when sent to a university will come out as a graduate after certain years of training; likewise in non-violence. One requires a laborious training and self-exertion. The Home is the class-room. The study is oneself. You cannot inculcate to others a lesson you cannot practise yourself. The cult of

Satyagraha impels you to set the example. You cannot ask others to be patient, yourself being angry and given to outbursts of temper. A little introspection, a friendly warning in time, a real desire to improve oneself—these are conditions prerequisite to one's own regeneration. First of all we must realise we are given to anger. The admission of one's own fault or folly is indispensable to one's recovery. That would presently be followed by a desire and determination to recover. Take a count of your failings—how many times you have burst out into a brutal exhibition of passion. Ask your son to warn you. His very presence before you at the next trial would be sufficient to reclaim you. If you are still refractory, your wife may well put in her presence. That would be an unusual phenomenon in your study or sitting-room, but that would be an unfailing remedy. If everything fails, there is the last resort, that may effectively be adopted. Ask some one to show you a good mirror so that in it you may see how bad you look in that fit of temper. An angry man is an ugly man. His face is thrown up into contortions. The ape and the tiger dance on the lineaments which present none of their poise or elegance. You would simply be ashamed of yourself. Advancing years are no impediment or excuse in the way of these remedies being employed. It is never too late to turn a new leaf in the book of your character. Old age cannot claim exemption from the unrelenting law of a subdued temper any more than it can from the equally inexorable demand of common ethics. When your self is brought under, then you can apply the principle of progress to your wife and children. How often do we not make brutes of ourselves in dealing with

them! It is only the sense of decorum of the former and the physical helplessness of the latter that saves your face. Sometimes, you are lucky in having a son of six who roundly tells you that you should not beat him or that he got angry that afternoon but controlled it by tightening the reins that he has in his heart. Such experiences give a complete new turn to our own lives.

A Satyagrahi should begin with himself and his family and from the domestic sphere to the domain of society, is but one leap or even an imperceptible transition. It is thus that a new habit of mind is cultivated, a new trait of character developed, a new code of conduct evolved for the home and society and a new standard of morality comes into being in the State itself. As J. H. Holmes has tersely put it:

> What other men have taught as a personal discipline, Gandhi has transformed into a social programme for the redemption of the world.

The Seed and the Tree

The seeds of a new movement must have been sown long before the plant sprouts, and the tree flowers and fruits. And too, the first fruits of a graft mango are plucked out, for if allowed to be enjoyed they kill the tree. The tree must be allowed to draw its full nutriment from the soil below through its roots and from the atmosphere around through its leaves, before its yield can be a source of enjoyment to the owner. What an age passes them between the sowing and the reaping. A jack tree takes twelve years to bear fruit. Is it any wonder that an ethical movement such as that of non-violence should take at least a quarter of century before

it takes shape and influences human institutions? This idea has been aptly expressed by Count Hermann Keyserling in the observation that each historic happening really takes place about twenty-five years before it becomes visible. That is not all. Between the ideas that planned a movement and the programmes that ultimately results from it there is a difference even as there is a difference between the parent and the child both in lineament and character. Every new movement really begins as a downright protest against certain prevailing belief. There is a natural tendency for the pendulum of progress to kick from one extreme to the opposite. When Goneril and Regan swore, in answer to King Lear's enquiry as to whom they loved best, that they loved him (their father) more than their spouses, their sister Cordelia went to the opposite extreme and would not say anything in reply. "What have you to say, Cordelia?" asks Lear. "Nothing" is the answer. "Nothing?" "Nothing," "then nothing brings thee nothing." That is the law of opposites. If Gandhi has therefore spoken of Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha based upon Truth and Non-violence and defined Non-violence not merely as a negative factor but as a positive force,—aggressive, long-suffering, all-embracing and widely receptive, if Gandhi seeks to abolish the police and the army and establish a kind of philosophical anarchism, he is doing nothing incomprehensible to the Indian mind beyond seeking to quicken the transition of the *Kali Yug* into the *Krita Yug*, in one bound. Social and ethical evolutions may not admit of rapid and sudden, kaleidoscopic transformations. But as Sir S. Radhakrishnan has said, it is the slowness of evolution that brings about Revolutions and if we should avoid the latter, we must

quicken the pace of the former. And if from the extreme reaction of Gandhi to his environment, there tends to be brought into being some deduction, that must be interpreted as the attempt of society to find its own level. That is why the Congress is hesitating to accept Gandhi's advice and abolish the army from the Central Government, while Gandhi himself is not unwilling to make a concession regarding the Police in the Provinces.

IV

Non-violence is a composite term and a comprehensive philosophy. It is not a single act of beneficence or benevolence. It sums up within itself all those virtues that spring from love of which it is the equivalent. "Love is long-suffering," said Christ and long-suffering implies forbearance, patience and forgiveness. It implies that one should not bear ill-will towards another, for ill-will is the root of all anger and vengeance and vendetta. Whether it is a disciple who has transgressed his own promises; or a member of an Ashram, who has broken the pledges of his organisation; or a member of the Legislature who does not believe in Gandhi's Philosophy; or the Government that has determined to bring down the longings of a nation's soul seeking emancipation from its bondage; on all these and a hundred and one other circumstances, Gandhi's patience is remarkable. He does not feel perturbed by any or all of these but that the objective passion of anger is forthwith transformed into the subjective feeling of distress,—distress over the thought that one's own love for the adversary is not able to bear fruit and exert influence upon him. Impatience is only a manifestation of violence. Being

a man of patience, Gandhi cannot be in a hurry or act in haste, but it leaves a reaction upon the body. Is it any wonder that all the pent-up passion, however, subdued and subjugated, should have reacted upon his heart and his blood vessels and raised his blood pressure to an alarming height every now and then?

That the victories of peace are more glorious than those of war, is a common saying but few of us know that that Peace which takes its ascendancy over war is not the peace that concludes a war, such as the Treaty of Versailles which has proved the seed-bed of a new and ever more sanguinary war, but peace which means 'goodwill and fellowship on earth.' Gandhi's faith in such a peace is illustrated by the great triumph which he has achieved in the North-West Frontier of India. He describes the progress of Non-violence amongst the fighting races there as follows:—

> I was not prepared for what I saw. They are in dead earnest about the thing and there is deep-rooted sincerity in their hearts. They themselves see light and hope in non-violence ..Before, it was all darkness. There was not a family but had its blood feuds. They lived like tigers in a den. Though the Pathans used to be always armed with knives, daggers and rifles, they used to be terrified of their superior officers lest they should lose their jobs. All that has changed now with thousands. Blood feuds are becoming a thing of the past among those Pathans who have come under the influence of Khan Saheb's non-violence movement and, instead of depending for their livelihood on paltry jobs, they have turned to the soil for cultivation and soon they will turn to industry if their promise is kept.

It is interesting to note the repeated expression of Gandhi's faith in Non-violence, and we quote below in proof of the vigour of that faith which is only equalled by the vigour of its expression from an article writ-

ten on the eve of Munich.

> God has chosen me as his instrument for presenting Non-violence to India for dealing with her ills. My faith in Non-violence remains as strong as ever, I am quite sure that not only should it answer all our requirements in our own country but that it should, if properly applied, prevent the bloodshed that is going on outside India and is threatening to overthrow the Western world.

Non-violence was on one occasion defined by Gandhi himself.

> In my opinion, [said he] Non-violence is not passivity in any shape or form. Non-violence, as I understand it, is the most active force in the world. Non-violence is the supreme law.

Gandhi's non-violence has nothing in it of passivity or cowardice.

> "I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour," said he, "than that she should, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour."

Let it, however, be remembered that his advice is not the second best, but only the last best or the last advice given. With him peace is the greatest of blessings only when it is won and kept by manhood but it is a blessing that will not long be the housemate of cowardice.

Power of Non-violence

Gandhi has never felt helpless with Non-violence as his creed.

> The hardest metal yields to sufficient heat, even so must the

> hardest heart melt before the sufficiency of the heat of Non-violence. And there is no limit to the capacity of Non-violence to generate heat. During my half century of experience, I have not yet come across a situation when I had to say that I was helpless, that I had no remedy in terms of Non-violence.

Were it not for such vast potentialities of Non-violence, Smuts would not have said:—

> I do not like your people and I do not care to assist them at all. But what am I to do? You help us in our days of need. How can we lay hands upon you. I often wish that you took to violence like the English strikers and then we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to helplessness.

Gandhi's "Letter to every Briton" is a daring performance, but that the idea expressed therein is not a new one, is clear from a piece of earlier advice he had tendered through the columns of the *New York Times*, whose correspondent asked him in the March crisis for a message to the world. Gandhi recommended simultaneous disarmament on the part of the Democratic powers as a solution. And Rev. Winslow's advice to Jews that Satyagraha is—

> the only key which can unlock the door of escape from the madhouse into the sunshine of sanity and peace for a world increasingly conscious of impending catastrophe.

Verily,

> Gandhiji's lead comes as a challenge and a gleam of hope to a world obsessed by the fear of war and preparations for war, [as Dr. Wood has aptly said].

V

Ever since the non-coöperation movement began, it has been qualified as non-violent in character. That people emphasised the *noun* more than the *adjective* has made no difference in the peremptory character of the qualification. Congressmen became doubtless reconciled to the condition but all did not heartily accept Non-violence as a *creed*. Then came into existence the term *policy* and Non-violence came since to be distinguished—now as a policy, now as a creed. This substratal difference did not force itself to the front, so long as Congress had not to exercise power. When once the Provincial Ministries were formed, (July 1937) the duties of the Police involved firing on numerous occasions and in a province like United Provinces, the military had to be summoned 47 times in the space of less than two and a half years. In addition there arose during the progress of the war the prospect, however dim and distant,—of manning the Central Government whose jurisdiction covers the military. It became, therefore, a vital question whether the Congress Ministers should run the Police and the Military departments of Government, much as they have been run all the world over as well as in India all these years. Here came what looked like a parting of the ways. Gandhi was definitely for the inauguration of a Peace Army and the steady elimination of Force. His colleagues on the Working Committee were divided into two groups. Thus became clear the effects of acceptance of Non-violence as a creed and Non-violence as a policy. As the latter, it is good enough only for being employed against the Britisher in the struggle for Swaraj. As the former, it serves as a potent weapon in order to

establish a new order of society based upon truth and Non-violence. But policy or creed, the fact remains the same,—that so long as the principle is avowed, so long it cannot be that the votaries of non-violence can change their adherence to the cult at their pleasure. We have already explained how long ago, Gandhi had dealt with the question in unambiguous terms when he said that "even policies require honest adherence in thought, word and deed. But if Non-violence is to remain the policy of the nation, we are bound to carry it out to the letter and in the spirit."

Gandhi has at this critical moment slightly altered his nomenclature but the alteration is pregnant with meaning. He calls what has been termed non-violence as a *policy*, the non-violence of the *weak* and what has been described as non-violence as a *creed*, the non-violence of the *strong*. The former implies that we have adopted non-violence because we have not been strong enough to exercise violence, while the latter suggests that though we are strong enough to exercise violence we abjure it and in all conditions adopt non-violence. In other words, we may describe the two types as non-violence by *compulsion* and non-violence by *election*. In the June and July, 1940 meetings of the Working Committee of the Congress, Gandhi for the first time brought up the question of the Civic Guards. The Committee gave its full consideration to the question whether they should be armed or not? And that if the Congress were to form the Central Government, what attitude they were to adopt towards the Army?

Gandhi began to pour forth his soul into the discussions and charged the proceedings of the Working Committee with a tension which baffled its ready

judgment. Time was flying. Press correspondents and the public were impatient. What was the secret that had to be so carefully guarded? Political secrets, like those of lovers which appear to require careful guarding at one time, become public property erelong and create a wonder all round that they should ever have been kept under lock and key for so long. The secret of Wardha between 17th and 21st of July which was sedulously guarded from the Press has since become public property—in that Gandhi has been absolved from all decisions of the Working Committee relating to the protection of the country from internal disorder as well as external aggression. It would be just as well, therefore, for the public to realise that this request of Gandhi for absolution was the one secret of Wardha. He has made his demand for non-violence in emphatic and unambiguous terms and the Wardha resolution of the Working Committee is now not only a chapter of history, but the very pivot around which all discussions in a critical period of history centred for over four weeks.

Weapon of the Strong

Gandhi claimed at Wardha that the Congress had been able to present to Europe wallowing in the mire of violence, a weapon to take the place of brute force in the arbitrament of international disputes. Non-violence can be used as a weapon of the weak and as well as of the strong. Hitherto the Congress was using it as the weapon of the weak, but he thought that now is the opportunity to use it against the strong forces which may create trouble internally for the invading army. If Congress could have tested the

efficacy of non-violence in their struggle against Britain, and created an unprecedented awakening of the masses, if at the same time they had met with like results in internal disorders and internecine strifes—the blame rested at their own doors, and the non-violence that they had to employ was the non-violence of the strong. Here lay, therefore, the parting of the ways. Would the Working Committee shirk the responsibility and betray the trust reposed in them at the psychological moment, or sustain its proud record of decades in spite of the dangers and difficulties incidental to the choice? The question of acceptance of office, Gandhi thought, was inseparably connected with this problem and he was clear that power should not be sought once again until the Congress had acquired non-violent control over the masses. Accordingly, it followed that the Congress would discard the use of arms in repelling foreign attacks and create a peace army, which would become a 'living wall' against the invader. This, in short, was Gandhi's lead, this was his scheme at Wardha. It raised a new issue for the first time, created a certain consternation and demanded an immediate decision.

Gandhi in all his experiments in life has had only to do with Satyagraha and Non-violence in relation to an enslaved country; but the possibility of extending the domain of his experiments and the power of non-violent strategy to self-governing countries enjoying sovereign power, was not out of his mind. On several occasions, he has said that a country which is able to establish its own freedom as against so mighty a power like the British Empire, should be equally able to maintain that freedom by the very methods by which it had won it. As much as to say that because, she attains

freedom through non-violence, she must be able to maintain it through that very force. His simple theme is that instead of war-armies wedded to violence and bloodshed, there should be peace-armies, which should be prepared to throw themselves between the invading army and their own country.

Message to Czechs

It would be relevant here to recall to the reader's mind what Gandhi had said in regard to surrender of the Czechs in October 1938:

> I want to speak to the Czechs [said he] because their plight moved me to the point of physical and mental distress and I felt that it would be cowardice on my part not to share with them the thoughts that were dwelling up within me. It is clear that the small nations must either come or be ready to come under the protection of the dictators or be a constant menace to the peace of Europe. In spite of all the goodwill in the world England and France cannot save them. Their intervention can only mean bloodshed and destruction such as has never been seen before. If I were a Czech, therefore, I would free these two nations from the obligation to defend my country. And yet I must live. I would not be a vassal to any nation or body. I must have absolute independence or perish. To seek to win in a clash of arms would be pure bravado. Not so, if in defying the might of one who would deprive me of my independence I refused to obey his will and perished unarmed in the attempt. In so doing, though I lose the body, I save my soul, i.e., my honour. This inglorious peace should be my opportunity. I must live down the humiliation and gain real independence. But, says a comforter, 'Hitler knows no pity. Your spiritual effort will avail nothing before him.' My answer is, 'you may be right. History has no record of a nation having adopted non-violent resistance. If Hitler is unaffected by my suffering, it does not matter. For I shall have lost nothing worthy. My honour is the only thing worth pre-

serving. That is independent of Hitler's pity. But as a believer in non-violence, I may not limit its possibilities. Hitherto he and his likes have built upon their invariable experience that men yield to force. Unarmed men, women and children offering non-violent resistance without any bitterness in them will be a novel experience for them. Who can dare say that it is not in their nature to respond to the higher and finer forces? They have the same soul that I have.' But says another comforter, 'What you say is all right for you. But how do you expect your people to respond to the novel call? They are trained to fight. In personal bravery they are second to none in the world. For you now to ask them to throw away their arms and be trained for non-violent resistance, seems to me to be a vain attempt. You may be right. But I have a call I must answer. I must deliver my message to my people. This humiliation has sunk too deep in me to remain without an outlet. I, at least, must act up to the light that has dawned on me. This is how I should, I believe, act if I was a Czech. When I first launched out on Satyagraha, I had no companion. We were thirteen thousand men, women and children against a whole nation capable of crushing the existence out of us. I did not know who would listen to me. It all came as in a flash. All the 13,000 did not fight. Many fell back. But the honour of the nation was saved. New history was written by the South African Satyagraha.

I present Dr. Benes with a weapon not of the weak but of the brave. There is no bravery greater than a resolute refusal to bend the knee to an earthly power, no matter how great, and that without bitterness of spirit and in the fullness of faith that the spirit alone lives, nothing else does.

On October 8, 1938 i.e., on the conclusion of the Munich Pact, Gandhi said:

The Czechs could not have done anything else, when they found themselves deserted by their two powerful allies. And yet I have the hardihood to say that if they had known the use of non-violence as a weapon for the defence of national honour, they would have faced the whole might of Germany with that of Italy thrown in.**** If India could

gain her freedom through non-violence, as Congressmen are to believe they can, she could also defend her freedom by the same means, hence so could a small nation like Czecho-Slovakia... . They can lose nothing by trying the vow of Non-violence. ...I suggest that if it is brave as it is, to die to a man fighting against odds, it is braver still to refuse to fight and yet to refuse to yield to the usurper. [Gandhi proceeds]—the powers know that men acquiesce before physical violence. But unarmed men, women and children refusing to submit to superior force, bearing beatifically the atrocities inflicted upon them without entertaining any malice, would be a new experience to the powers.

The tragedies that confront us in life give little notice to us. When at Wardha Gandhi raised the question of non-violence in its larger applicability to defence of self-governing India, he virtually courted the great tragedy of his life—not that he would succumb under one such but that it was up to him to have avoided it. But his is not the nature to avoid or evade troubles or even tragedies. He put forth a clear test to his colleagues. Is his teaching a live force or a dead formula? Indeed, it is the tendency of all creeds, opinions and dogmas that have once defined themselves in institutions to become inoperative. The vital and formative principle which was active during the process of crystallization into sects or schools of thought or government, ceases to act, and what was once a living emanation of the eternal mind organically operative in history becomes the dead formula on men's lips and the dry topic of the annalist. On the side of his colleagues, there was a feeling that they could not ignore the actualities and limitations of the work-a-day-world in which their lot was cast. Their colour came and went between their loyalty to their spiritual preceptor and their obligations to their political duties.

Loyalty had hitherto been based more upon faith than on reason, more on sentiment and even superstition than on conviction, had its seat more in the blood than in the brain. Now there came an application of understanding and a test of practicability. That loyalty which was "picturesque, devoted and beautiful as self-forgetfulness always is, has become something more than all these,—logical." The firmness with which Gandhi found his colleagues adhere to their convictions pleased him but the tenacity with which they clung to their wrong conclusions distressed him. The cause of the distress was that the offer of military aid—not merely moral—which followed in the train of the changed outlook would mean that for the future India's mind would turn to the military technique, India's march would be in the military direction. Now was the time to choose and a wrong choice of direction would lead the journey to a wrong destination. It was easy to see that beneath his calm and composure there was a volcano pent up, an agony of soul, an anguish of heart which only his characteristic laugh could cover. Well could he have ejaculated the stirring stanzas of Langston Hughes, the Negro poet:—

Because my mouth
Is wide with Laughter
And my throat
Is deep with song
You do not think
I suffer after
I have held my pain so long
* * *
Because my mouth
Is wide with Laughter
You do not hear
My inner cry?

Because my feet are gay with dancing
You do not know I die.

VII

In dealing with the subject of Gandhism and Non-violence, which is the very basis of it, it is but right that we should deal also with some of the objections, which have been raised from time to time to this cult of non-violence in its larger meaning and fuller scope. If non-violence is a religion and if we are asked to be brave and high-souled and to practise love unto all, non-violence merely becomes a synonym of universal love, abstracted altogether from the realities of the world, whereas the non-violent soldier must be "willing to die without harbouring malice against the prosecutors." That is Gandhi's demand. Gandhi recognises no enemy and lays down that a Satyagrahi should love his so-called enemy ever as his friend. That is why he has repeatedly proclaimed that as a Satyagrahi, he, as a votary of Ahimsa, wishes well of England. "Non-violence, therefore," in Gandhism, "is love that will never strike with a material weapon." It is claimed by the critics that however eminent and feasible it may be as a personal virtue, it cannot hold water for a moment, as a political measure of permanent application. The *Bhagwad Gita* is quoted in support of the exercise of force, which should be judged by the motive operating in the person exercising it and not by the fact of the exercise of force itself. The authority of the Geeta is further quoted that a person with a spirit of love for all can even strike without offending his moral and spiritual ideal. Martin Luther is quoted by the critics as saying that "good works will never make a good man, but a good man does good works; bad

works never make a bad man, but a bad man does bad works." In this view, the critic might have even cited the example of Gandhi ordering the premature death of the calf destined to die, by an injection in order to save its suffering or of the shooting of the monkey in the *Ashram* gardens to rid the crops of this nuisance. The critic does not find fault with Gandhi for these acts, for Martin Luther's authority justifies it. In fact, it is the contention of the critics that the ancient Hindu teachers and sages regarded non-violence as a monastic virtue, while Gandhi would make no such distinction excepting in the case of cowardice and a coward who, according to his dictum, should prefer violence to cowardice for he said, "to one, who cannot die courageously without killing, my advice is that of killing and being killed, rather than that of shamefully fleeing from danger." Otherwise, Gandhi cannot accept expediency or compromise at the sacrifice of his principles. He is a prophet whose plan of thought and action is high above the common level of life and therefore is beyond the reach of ordinary mortals in the work-a-day world. The critic quotes the latest failing of the Congress in not being able to elevate itself to the high altitude of the non-violent defence of India against an armed invasion. Gandhi declares "that it is tragic." "Whether one or many," times without number he has declared his faith that it is better for India to discard violence altogether even for defending her own borders.

The proposition that force is no violence is sometimes sought to be supported by quotations from ancient law-givers and authorities on Indian polity. No purpose is served by merely quoting history in proof of Hinduism accepting the doctrine of *Ahimsa*,

in Hindu religious and ethical literature. If it admitted five thousand years ago of exceptions, limitations or qualifications, if the Hindu books on polity and *Neethi Sasthra* had emphasized the employment of force for legitimate purposes, such as the preservations of Law and Order and the defence of society against external aggression, if the Hindu books on polity even recognized, the conquest of other kingdoms and countries, with approval, it cannot lie in the mouths of savants and scholars to-day, fifty centuries after the authorities quoted, to hold fast to the same inhibitions and inspirations. It is not as if resistance to aggression and force are given upon, but we seek to make that resistance non-violent in the twentieth century. That the unmitigated doctrine of non-violence had never been carried out is no reason why it should never be carried out hereafter. One might as well say—our ancestors never flew in the air and therefore we should or could never. The very protagonists of force on this basis are the most advanced specimens of heterodoxy who believe in the machine age and modern engineering, in the conquest of nature by man through sciences—pure and applied. With all due humility we suggest to the critics—some of them elder and patriarchs of society that in this world progress has not come to a stop any more in the world of ethics than in the sphere of physical progress. The soul of man has been so far imprisoned in his body. The body and the mind have been dictating to the soul. The new era is one in which the spirit moves the body and makes it but its vehicle—not its master.

There is another kind of objection to Ahimsa, which is not on a practical or historical but a metaphysical basis. The critic here describes Ahimsa, quoting

Sabda Sagar as meaning "to kill, beat, torment, annoy or cause loss to a living being," and contends that non-payment of taxes by a subject nation to a foreign ruler and the refusal to obey his laws is calculated to annoy its officials and therefore, this part of the Satyagrahic programme falls within the range of *Himsa.* The votary of *Ahimsa*, it is claimed according to the Sabda Sagar, should not "cause pain to any living being either by word or deed or even in thought." And the critics ask whether in Bardoli in the no-tax campaign. India did not cause loss to Government, which resulted in pain to the poor tenants and their families. It is further contended that our own Rishis, who have laid down the rule of Ahimsa, have broken it in season and out of season and when they flung imprecations on unfortunate persons, sometimes for no reason, they were, if anything, votaries of violence. Examples are quoted from the *Ithihasas* to show how Parasu Rama and Viswamitra indulged in such curses, Animandap cursed Yavraj and Narada had the audacity to lay a curse on the Great Vishnu himself and how the curses took effect. Dharma-Vyadha, we are reminded, told Kausika that in the Vedas it is written that medicines, creepers, beasts, birds and deer are just like human food and those who eat them commit no sin. Accordingly, they urge that *Himsa* and *Ahimsa* are interchangeable terms. The killing of an animal for sport is Himsa but the killing of an animal for food is not.

Answer to Criticisms

These criticisms must be answered fully and satisfactorily. If the Great War on the battle-field of Kurukshetra was settled by sheer violence, justified

on whatever ground it may be, the fact remains that on the conclusion of the war, the whole of the Kaurava race was swept away and the Pandavas, five in number, and a dog, the incarnation of Yama, remained to carry out their Maha-Prasthan as described in the Swargarohana Parvam, leaving behind the solitary heir alone to the throne. When the Pandavas were victorious, and Dharmaraj performed a great sacrifice involving loss of life to celebrate the victory, a Golden mongoose crossed his path and twitted him on his practice of violence. In Gandhiji's cult, no distinction is made between a monastic virtue practised by a monk or anchorite, who has renounced the world and a citizen, who is a part of the living world and is called upon to carry on his social and civic duties. It is to break this distinction of social, economic and political, material and spiritual, that Gandhi has evolved a new formula, which looks upon life as a composite whole, admitting of no compartmentalism in thought and conduct and therefore, his standards of judgment are applicable to one sphere of human activity as well as to another. It is this exaltation of view and vision that he wants everybody to share with him.

The second of the critics, takes a logical view of a matter which is essentially connected with life. So often, we have had occasion to notice how a logical conclusion is not necessarily a reasonable consequence and how the laws of life materially differ from those of law and logic. Because a vegetable is endowed with life and the Japanese believe that they have a soul too, and because even a vegetarian destroys life and soul in consuming vegetables, therefore, to say that those who kill animals and eat them or who destroy human life in order to settle their quarrels are no worse than

those who are vegetarians or Satyagrahis may look like good logic but it is bad life. If the ancient Rishis were so powerful with their own *Mantrabala* as to shower imprecations and curses upon those who were the object of their wrath, it does not mean that they and their conduct are approved under the scheme of Satyagraha. After all there were Rishis and Rishis amongst them, there was a Vasishta, a Viswamitra and a Durvasa. They had their own foibles in life. We cannot look back to our Rishis as persons of spotless character, who practised the highest injunctions of Ahimsa in the greatest measure.

There is a third view to be combated, which avers that Ahimsa is capable of succeeding only with "decent people" and that when we carry on the doctrine to its fullest length, even the best of men who may practise its teachings may fail and "quail before the prospect of having to try it out with a ruthless ruffian." But there is a fallacy in this reasoning. If Satyagraha and Ahimsa are destined to succeed, they must succeed when the opponent is—not a votary of Satya or of Ahimsa but when he is really, an apostle of force and the worshipper at the shrine of violence—*asatya* and *himsa*. There is a certain self-contradiction in the statement that Ahimsa will succeed only against a decent person; a decent person to be fully decent must be a non-violent person and himself a follower of Ahimsa; the statement then means that Ahimsa will succeed only against Ahimsa but a simple answer to it is that if two persons follow Ahimsa, the two will never need to come into conflict with each other. It is with Himsa that Ahimsa has to quarrel, even as light has to overcome darkness and truth—untruth and death, life.

The old Upanishat text says:

"असतोमा सद्गमय,
तमसोमा ज्योतिर्गमय,
मृत्योर्माऽमृतंगमय।"

No one seriously argues that it is necessary to stage Satyagraha in order to overcome King Sri Rama or that *Jeevanmukta* known to Indian tradition, namely, Janaka Maharaja, or Saint Vasishta. These are hardly capable of enacting a measure or conceiving a thought of uttering a word which requires Satyagraha to counteract their effect. It is against the wicked and the vicious that Satyagraha is required and the more wicked you prove the opponent to be, the more strongly you are proving the case of Satyagraha to operate against him.

Sometimes it is argued that violence too has wrought enough good. It is not violence in such cases, as is pointed out by Aldous Huxley that has worked the good but it is the compensatory acts of non-violence, and he illustrates the theory by quoting the examples of Britain in India and Rome in Gaul, though he admits "it is hard to say whether these conquests have resulted in progress."

Hindu society has isolated violence and made the Kshatriya the upholder of Law and Order, the sole community that can wield weapons of warfare. Buddhism forbids even laymen to have anything to do with the manufacture and sale of arms, with the making of poisons and intoxicants, with the soldiering or the slaughter of animals. The culture of the Hindus and Buddhists did not spread through crusades or jehads, but made its way along paths of peaceful persuasion. It is not merely in the Hindu or Buddhist scheme of

life and government that such sequestration of violence has taken place—even where the war spirit is rampant as in Europe today, the call for soldiers reaches stratum after stratum according to age and family responsibilities. The world has thus all along recognized the objectionableness of violence.

The Satyagrahi's Conception

There are friends who, say what you will, mistake non-violence for cowardice. The prowess of man, his pride and his prestige, his pre-eminence—all depend upon the issue whether he is able to uphold his property, power and authority by his strength,—his physical might. The non-violent Satyagrahi is equally zealous of his reputation, his country's honour, the over-riding claims of his religion, the right to himself of free worship, the ownership of his goods and chattel, the sanctity of his home, the chastity and modesty of his women-folk, the corporate well-being of his society and the independence of his motherland. And in India we have seen to what sacrifices the Satyagrahi has been impelled by Gandhi's teachings. To recount them would be needless waste of time if not undesirable display of vanity. Suffice it to say that the Satyagrahi leader has placed himself in the van, not in the rear, incurred the highest sufferings himself and set an example to his following. The proud Imperialist too recruits armies and throws them as food for cannon,—of course, amongst them he has the honour of counting his own sons. Only the Satyagrahi does not talk vague generalities and airy nothings. "The uplift of the backward communities and the emancipation of smaller nationalities" was a favourite expression during the

days of President Wilson and the great European war (1914-1917-18). How they have proved to be a pious fraud and sanctified hypocrisy has been shown by later events. The care of the poor and concern for the helpless has to be worked out not on a mass scale but by piecing together small units. Indeed, it is, as it were a cottage craft, not a machine industry. It must be sedulously worked at, taken on hand individually and it is the summation of these apparent trifles that makes really 'human' things. You cannot destroy a whole nation by the assertion and exercise of your superior physical force in order to save that nation from the evil effects of another force which you only wish to exceed in measure and excel in quality.

There are others who would argue with Browning that it is not what man does but what man would do that exalteth him. That is true. So often with the best of intentions we come to the worst, but with the worst of intentions we cannot come to the best. It may be that you are not always moved by vengeance when you apply violence. Force, it is argued, is by itself no sin, it is only a forcible way of restoring a correct attitude in an erring individual or nation. The maternal violence to the child is well meant, and is of deep spiritual upspringing. When people are asked why they do not wear Khaddar (handspun hand woven Indian cloth) they say: I don't believe in parading my love of the poor, but rip open my heart and there you see my love of country writ large in letters of blood." This is sophistry if not prevarication. Yes we shall rip open your heart and see whether when you use force for the moment, the springs of your action are not traceable to anger and vengeance, whether it is not really the reaction in you to the neglect of your supe-

rior personality by your opponent, to your desire to teach a lesson to him. The policeman that is out for a lathi charge fans and feeds his passion by loud cries calculated to make himself and his atmosphere wild, not human. The parents that mishandle the child cannot long suppress their love for it, and they are presently overpowered by a certain penitence and self-reproach. Not so the armies that attack the enemy or the statesmen that egg them on to the firing line. Neither the warrior nor the statesman believes himself capable of being mistaken—although it is to the Duke of Wellington that the remark is attributed 'dear man and brother, it is just possible that you too are mistaken.' "You may be mistaken," say the modern military minded men, "but not I or we." The Satyagrahi never draws a distinction between his motive and his conduct any more than he does between his ends and his means. He carries his heart in his sleeve. He has no hidden pure motive behind his open, impure acts.

Or take the Fascist ideal which depicts war in glowing colours,—as the medium that affords the opportunity for the exercise of those qualities of courage and manhood which patriots must abound in. The knife that is laid aside rusteth, say they. The razor grows in sharpness with use. Ah, but one razor does not use another to preserve its own sharpness and one warrior cannot keep his spirits in condition by sacrificing another's life. The Satyagrahi does not object to the warrior sacrificing his own life to preserve his spirit unsullied. Nor would that spirit remain unsullied when the warrior, who is prepared to lay down his life, first seeks to take another's. To take life does not exalt it, but to surrender one's life exalts the person that surrenders himself. The way to peace does not

lie along a sanguinary path. It is the feet that are not wet with the blood of others that can reach the destination of peace and good-will on earth.

Many, however, ask—some in derision, others in sincerity—whether in a world conditioned as it is, built on violence and based on competition, this principle of co-operation, this sentiment of love, this theory of self-surrender has any practical chances of acceptance or even of acceptability. These friends have no doubt in the innate purity of human nature, they are overborne by the sight of the corrosion and corruption that they witness all round, and in utter wonderment ask whether, if this be the position with the cultured few what should be expected of the untutored many. They forget that the untutored many are the unsophisticated millions whose minds are not confused by casuistry but whose perceptions and instincts retain their natural sharpness and purity. What is wanted is not a psychological study of the Theory and Practice of non-violence nor a calculated appraisement of the potentialities of the new philosophy. It is faith that is wanted and with faith grows tradition while both create an atmosphere. Our children grow in the right atmosphere,—such for instance as of vegetarianism. What do the children of two know about fish, meat or onions? Yet in vegetarian families they abhor their sight and the very mention of their names. They grow as non-meat-eaters and lead a life of abstinence from liquor. Even so if we want to reform our world and society torn asunder by jars and mutual recriminations, by wars and violence, by vendetta and bloodshed; we must spread broadcast the seeds of forgiveness, charity and love and we shall erelong pave the way for a new world whose pabulum will be soul

force—not brute force.

Non-violence is the most invisible and the most effective miracle.

> I have no doubt in my mind about the superiority of non-violence, [said Prof. Mays]. But the thing that bothers me is about its exercise on a large scale, the difficulty of so disciplining the mass mind on the point of love. It is easier to discipline individuals. What should be the strategy when they break out? Do we retreat or do we go on?
>
> I have had the experience, [said Gandhi] in the course of our movement here. People do not gain the training by preaching. Non-violence cannot be preached. It has to be practised. The practice of violence can be taught to people by outward symbols. You shoot at boards, then at targets, then at beasts. Then you are passed as an expert in the art of destruction. The non-violent man has no outward weapon and therefore, not only his speech but his action also seems ineffective. I may say all kinds of sweet words to you without meaning them. On the other hand I may have real love in me and yet my outward expression may be forbidding. Then outwardly my action in both cases may be the same and yet the effect may be different. For the effect of our action is often more potent when it is not patently known. Thus the unconscious effect you are making on me I may never know. It is, nevertheless, infinitely greater than the conscious effect. In violence there is nothing invisible. Non-violence, on the other hand, is three-fourths invisible, and so the effect is in the inverse ratio to its invisibility. Non-violence, when it becomes active, travels with extraordinary velocity, and then it becomes a miracle. So the mass mind is affected first unconsciously then consciously. When it becomes consciously affected there is demonstrable victory. In my own experience when people seemed to be weakening there was no consciousness of defeat in me. Thus I was full of hope in the efficacy of non-violence after the renunciation of Civil Disobedience in 1922, and today I continue to be in the same hopeful mood. It is not a mere emotional thing. Supposing I saw no signs of dawn coming I should not lose faith. Everything has to come in its proper time.

We live in a world and in society in which *heredity* and *environment* act and react upon each other. A heredity charged with faith and consolidated by tradition is always subjected to the buffets of logic and reason which the environment stimulates. In other words, the impulses and convictions that guide man's conduct are the resultant of forces of *science* acting upon the beliefs of *religion*, for what else is religion than the devout acceptance of doctrines and theories laboriously built up by our forbears based upon the reason and experiences of their own time and handed down to posterity with the sacredness of sanctions for right human conduct. To kill a bug, a louse, an ant, a rat, a frog, a squirrel, a grasshopper, a scorpion, a snake,—these are either viewed as pastimes or as necessities of life. If, however, the spirit of love is inculcated in one's very childhood, that love pours itself out in sympathy for the 'soulless' insect, and animal as much as for the 'soulful' waifs and strays. Why does the child's heart go out in sympathy for the victim of distress for it sees in the victim the same life as in itself, an identity of all life, a desire for its preservation and perpetuation. It is this feeling that stimulates sacrifice nor merely preaches it, so that leadership based upon this psychology always says 'come'—not 'go'. It is ready to sacrifice itself first and foremost. The non-violent soldier that loves the country, sacrifices himself, and sacrifices in himself, the smaller unit for the sake of the larger. Non-violence is thus widely receptive, deeply responsive and wholly self-sacrificing. What the mother does for the child the Satyagrahi does for the country, and the nation, transcending all limitations of consanguinity or ties of interest. And when a person displays love in return—nor merely for love,

nor for indifference and neutrality, but for enmity and hatred, that love becomes the purest, the most potent and the least grudging. It comes out of the abundance of the heart. Such love is, therefore, not only pure and undefiled but most successful in its purposiveness for it kindles a new sentiment in that purpose, it creates new energy, indeed it recreates itself in the opposite person. In other words, Love reproduces itself. Love does not doubt nor shrink from difficulty. It courts suffering for readiness to suffer is the proof of that feeling of oneness of spirit which lies at the bottom of all love. Suffering is largely an eastern conception along with humility. Both minimize or annihilate attachment, the former to the comforts of the body, the latter to the consciousness of superiority in mind and spirit. Humility is only a variant of love, it is its quintessence, an isomer so to put it; it is the state, really, of a perpetual readiness to serve, out of a spirit of love, even as suffering is the result of that service which the Satyagrahi is eternally prepared to take on himself. What blinds one's vision or blurs one's judgment is not any external barrier to understanding but an internal miasma which obfuscates the issue. It is the consciousness of one's superior intellect and superior morals. Arrogance and self-righteousness are the two obstacles to correct understanding, right judgment and that spirit of love which is generated by both these. Humility is the brake to the engine of *ahamkara*, of exaggerated sense of personal worth. Pride itself may at times stimulate humility, as is pointed out elsewhere when the inner chastening spirit of service is not the operative factor and when the readiness for suffering is not its sustenance and support. Pride, tyranny and fear are of one category, love, unity, service, humi-

lity and suffering are of the opposite.

Gandhi's reassertion in 1940 that a single Satyagrahi of the right type is enough to achieve any aim is not a statement made for the first time now. Soon after the campaign of Satyagraha in South Africa which concluded in the early part of 1908, Gandhi attended a meeting of Europeans in a suburb of Johanesburgh to explain the situation to them. We are told that one Mr. Hoskyn, a wealthy sympathiser who presided, made a certain remark which was galling to the pride and self-respect of Gandhi. He said that "passive resistance" as the movement was known at that time, was a movement which the Indians were pursuing just as the British Non-conformists and suffragists had done or were doing and was a weapon of the weak. It was then that he conceived the idea that a single Satyagrahi, psychologically and ethically strong was enough to achieve any object. At that meeting he entered a vigorous defence of the movement of Satyagraha which was 'soul-force,' he said. It covered 'passive resistance' but covered a much larger ground than that.

Gandhi gave all his thoughts latterly to train the country for non-violence, and in the course of the year 1938 he developed his scheme for the formation of a Peace Brigade. It was on June 18, 1938, Gandhi elaborated this plan of Peace Brigade and detailed the qualifications necessary for the members that would join it. The object of the Brigade is that those members who would join it should risk their lives in dealing with riots especially communal. This Brigade should be in a word substitute for the Police and even the military.

> The scheme [he said] might read ambitious, and the achievement may prove impossible. Yet, if the Congress is to succeed in its non-violent struggle, it must develop the power to deal peacefully with such situations.

He prescribed that

> (1) Every member of the Peace Brigade should have living faith in non-violence,
>
> (2) This messenger of peace must have equal regard for all the religions of the earth,
>
> (3) Work must be largely carried on by local men in their own localities,
>
> (4) Singly or in groups,
>
> (5) Contacts with people must be cultivated through personal services rendered in his locality or chosen circle so that in times of crisis, his presence may not be unwelcome or suspect,
>
> (6) A character beyond reproach and known for strict impartiality—is essential,
>
> (7) Where there are premonitions of a coming storm, the Peace Brigade should not wait till the conflagration breaks out,
>
> (8) The members must have sufficient leisure which would enable them to cultivate friendly relations with the people living in their circle,
>
> (9) They should have a descriptive dress so as to be recognised without difficulty.

The ideal that has been laid down here has been criticised in certain quarters as not an immediately attainable one and as an attempt to govern a continent on the principles of the Sermon on the Mount. Gandhi has explained that there is no scaring about the simple and peaceful proposal. The Peace Brigade is not expected to deal with all forms of crime and arrogate to itself the normal functions of the police. A com-

munal riot is however different. Occasion is sought to inflame passions and to create an ugly situation. It is then that the Peace Brigade should, as friends of the people, spring to them for their social service and using their influence, their character, their reputation to establish good sense where both have been abandoned.

In India, a great impetus has been given to non-violence by the persistent interest taken by Gandhi who successfully terminated all the hunger-strikes of the political prisoners in the Andamans in the year 1937.

He has followed it up by interesting himself in the release of prisoners and removal of restrictions on liberty bordering on imprisonment in Bengal and other provinces. It has led to an adequate response from the Bengal Government; and the first fruit of it, was the release of 1,100 prisoners immediately and accelerate the release of detenus and removal of restriction upon them thereafter. Gandhi congratulated the Government of Bengal on their decision and the very atmosphere was charged with the necessity for releasing non-violent prisoners all over the country. The Government of U. P., and Bihar accordingly decided to release all the prisoners; but the Government of India Act would not permit the ministers. Then a fight was put up in their behalf and the ministry of U. P., as well as Bihar tendered their resignations at the time of the Haripura Congress in February, 1938. Government of India relented and release of these prisoners opened a new chapter in the history of non-violence. Almost all the prisoners declared their disbelief in violence immediately after their release.

The World War has given renewed opportunities of presenting the case for non-violence with redoubled force and although at present, substantial results have

not followed the appeal of Gandhi or the Pope to the nations of Europe, there is little doubt that non-violence has come to stay. It is no longer a windy, vapoury rhetoric, nor the philosopher's stone, nor the unknown elixir of life, nor the magician's amulet. It is the unerring mentor and monitor of the human being, the searchlight within, the inner divinity that permeates the spirit of love for all living beings.

Non-violence is the tie by which all society is bound together. We are not aware of it any more than we were of the Law of gravitation binding together the Heavenly orbs till it was discovered. Even so how few be they who are conscious of this law of astronomy or that law of humanity in their day-to-day life and activities! Non-violence is therefore, the one visible or invisible basis of democracy and the more the people under it are aware of its foundations, the less would they rush into wars. And when two nations are at war with each other, it is obvious that neither can be a true democracy. Very often you find one is Fascist frankly so-called, and the other Imperialist reluctantly so known. Gandhi holds non-violence to be the means and Complete Independence the end for every nation. Non-violence and Truth are the Grammar of Love. They were born long before the Satyagrahi has discovered their usage in society even as the usages of language were born long before the grammarians had evolved the rules of conjunction and separation.

PART III

CHAPTER III

SATYAGRAHA

I

Its Philosophy

Satyagraha or the holding on to Truth in the solutions of the problems of life, is now accepted in theory, at any rate, as embodying a faultless philosophy, and if in practice it is still slow in gaining popularity or if only select groups of people are engaged in its propaganda that is because to the common mind, there are difficulties of understanding as well as conduct which are not easy to overcome. Truth is abstract, non-violence is concrete. Truth is the eternal principle ruling the structure of the world and lying behind its phenomena. Non-violence is the agency by which the upkeep of the world is maintained. Truth is the protoplasm of the cell and non-violence, the inter-cellular element which helps to form the tissues and hold them together. Truth may assume many forms but always enters into their composition as the abiding principle, even as cells may vary—now as osseous, now as muscular, now as of nervous, now as of blood, now as cutaneous and now as fatty. But wherever they be they form tissues. Even so truth lies as the basal factor in the solutions of all problems—ancient or modern, with the aid of non-violence. The combinations present a variety of forms but the two cardinal

principles cannot be divorced from each other in any synthesis that helps to solve life's intricacies.

Gandhi's Conception of Truth

Truth and non-violence which constitute the two component factors of the new technique are not passive, much less negative forces, they are positive, aggressive forces investing the programme with all the attributes of war on the violent plane. In confounding and demoralizing your enemies and ultimately conquering them by converting them, in engendering a rigid sense of discipline amongst its adherents, in working upon the mind and the emotion of the votaries of the new technique, in invoking courage, sacrifice and endurance, in mobilizing a nation-wide resistance with little capital and less of destructive armoury, Satyagraha operates as a positive and irresistible force to whose efficacy, experience has borne ample testimony.

A Double Accept

Gandhi's conception of Truth and non-violence is known to a few. It has a double aspect in respect of both, one a positive and the other a negative. When the Collector of Champaran wrote to him a stiff letter which he later decided to withdraw and asked for its return, and when the young followers of Gandhi began to copy it, Gandhi admonished them and said that, if they kept a copy, the letter could not be said to have been withdrawn. That was a new definition of Truth which was repeated during the Gandhi-Irwin Pact when the Home Secretary, Mr. Emerson's insulting letter was, on second thoughts, withdrawn, by the Govern-

ment of India and we have not got a copy of it today in the archives of the Congress—for the same reason namely, that to keep a copy of a letter that is withdrawn is to harbour it in your files as well as your breast, and that is untruth as well as anti-non-violence.

Satya in East and West

Therein we have been taught the very principles which are emphasised alike in the West and East.

> The one commanding law is that men should cling to truth and right if the very heavens fall [says John Morley]. Yet in practice, we know how all schools admit the necessity of accommodation as they say in the very interest of truth itself.

But as Morley himself points out:

> the consequences of putting the immediate social convenience in the first place and respect for truth in the second are seen in a distinct and unmistakable lowering of the level of National life, a slack and lethargic quality about public opinion, a growing predominance of material, temporal and selfish aims over those which are generous, spiritual and far-reaching, a deadly weakening of intellectual conclusiveness and clear-shining moral illumination and lastly of certain stoutness of self-respect.

Nor can you abandon the common people to lower and narrower forms of truth which in other words is falsehood, or as Morley asks:

> what can be more futile than to suppose that such a compromise will be listened to for a single moment by a caste whose first principle is that they are the possessors and ministers, not of a superior or an inferior form of truth, but of the very truth itself, absolute, final, complete, divinely sent and infallibly interpreted?

II

Its Crigins

The process of tracing the inspiration of great men to its origin is left to scholars and savants who follow the task as a matter of research. With Gandhi, however, it is otherwise. We have it all from his pen and from those who were in close contact with him when he first made his experiments with Truth. And oftentimes the testimony of an opponent is far more effective in popularizing a cause than the propaganda of followers. When, therefore, men like General Smuts and Hon. Jan H. Hofmeyer speak of these origins, we have first-hand evidence of an invaluable character.

> Often there is justice in the working of history—[says Hofmeyer] 'India, though not of its own volition had given to South Africa, one of the most difficult of its problems. South Africa, in its turn, likewise not of its own volition, gave to India the idea of Civil Disobedience.'

Satyagraha, when once it has been accepted as an instrument of immense potentialities and as one capable of "raising up to God both victim and violator alike" has come to be claimed by Christian and Hindu as constituting the cardinal teaching alike of their respective faiths. Truly has 'the cross moved East.' But here is Gandhi's own account of the origin of this movement:—

> For the past thirty years I have been preaching and practising Satyagraha. The principles of Satyagraha, as I know it today, constitute a gradual evolution. The term Satyagraha was coined by me in South Africa to express the force that the Indians there used for full eight years, and it was coined in order to distinguish it from the movement then going on in the United Kingdom and South Africa under the name of Passive Resistance. Its root meaning is 'holding

on to truth'; hence, Truth-force. I have also called it Love-force or Soul-force. In the application of Satyagraha I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one's opponent, but that he must be weaned from error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but one's own self. Satyagraha differs from Passive Resistance as the North Pole from the South. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end; whereas the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest, and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form.

* * *

When Daniel disregarded the laws of the Medes and Persians which offended his conscience, and meekly suffered the punishment for his disobedience, he offered Satyagraha in its purest form. Socrates would not refrain from preaching what he knew to be the truth to the Athenian youth, and bravely suffered the punishment of death. He was, in this case, a Satyagrahi. Prahlad disregarded the orders of his father, because he considered them to be repugnant to his conscience. He uncomplainingly and cheerfully bore the tortures, to which he was subjected, at the instance of his father. Mirabai is said to have offended her husband by following her own conscience, was content to live in separation from him and bore with quiet dignity and resignation all the injuries that are said to have been done to her in order to bend her to her husband's will. Both Prahlad and Mirabai practised Satyagraha. It must be remembered, that neither Daniel nor Socrates, neither Prahlad nor Mirabai had any ill-will towards their persecutors. Daniel and Socrates are regarded as having been model citizens of the States to which they belonged, Prahlad a model son, Mirabai a model wife.

* * *

This doctrine of Satyagraha is not new; it is merely an extension of the rule of domestic life to the political. Family disputes and differences are generally settled according to the

law of love. The injured member has so much regard for the others that he suffers injury for the sake of his principles without retaliating and without being angry with those who differ from him. And as repression of anger and self-suffering are difficult processes, he does not dignify trifles into principles, but, in all non-essentials, readily agrees with the rest of the family, and thus contrives to gain the maximum of peace for himself without disturbing that of the others. Thus his action, whether he resists or resigns, is always calculated to promote the common welfare of the family. It is this law of love, which silently but surely, governs the family for the most part throughout the civilised world.

* * *

I feel that nations cannot be one in reality, nor can their activities be conducive to the common good of the whole humanity, unless there is this definite recognition and acceptance of the law of the family in national and international affairs, in other words, on the political platform. Nations can be called civilised, only to the extent that they obey this law.

* * *

This law of love is nothing but a law of truth. Without truth there is no love; without truth it may be affection, as for one's country to the injury of others; or infatuation, as of a young man for a girl; or love may be unreasoning and blind, as of ignorant parents for their children. Love transcends all animality and is never partial. Satyagraha has, therefore, been described as a coin, on whose face you read love and on the reverse, you read truth. It is a coin current everywhere and has indefinable value.

* * *

Satyagraha is self-dependent. It does not require the assent of the opponent before it can be brought into play. Indeed, it shines out most when the opponent resists. It is therefore, irresistible. A Satyagrahi does not know what defeat is, for he fights for truth without being exhausted. Death in the fight is a deliverance, and prison, a gateway to liberty.

* * *

It is called also soul-force, because a definite recognition

of the soul within is a necessity, if a Satyagrahi is to believe that death does not mean cessation of the struggle, but a culmination. The body is merely a vehicle for self-expression: and he gladly gives up the body, when its existence is an obstruction in the way of the opponent seeing the truth, for which the Satyagrahi stands. He gives up the body in the certain faith that if anything would change his opponent's view, a willing sacrifice of his body must do so. And with the knowledge that the soul survives the body, he is not impatient to see the triumph of truth in the present body. Indeed, victory lies in the ability to die in the attempt to make the opponent see the truth, which the Satyagrahi for the time being expresses.

* * *

And as a Satyagrahi never injures his opponent and always appeals, either to his reason by gentle argument, or his heart by the sacrifice of self, Satyagraha is twice blessed, it blesses him who practises it, and him against whom it is practised.

* * *

It has, however, been objected that Satyagraha, as we conceive it, can be practised only by a select few. My experience proves the contrary. Once its simple principles—adherence to truth and insistence upon it by self-suffering—are understood, anybody can practise it. It is as difficult or as easy to practise as any other virtue. It is as little necessary for its practice that everyone should understand the whole philosophy of it, as it is for the practice of total abstinence.

* * *

After all, no one disputes the necessity of insisting on truth as one sees it. And it is easy enough to understand that it is vulgar to attempt to compel the opponent to its acceptance by using brute force; it is discreditable to submit to error, because argument has failed to convince and that the only true and honourable course is not to submit to it even at the cost of one's life. Then only can the world be purged of error, if it ever can be altogether. There can be no com-

promise with error when it hurts the vital being.

* * *

But, on the political field, the struggle on behalf of the people mostly consists in opposing error in the shape of unjust laws. When you have failed to bring the error home to the law-giver by way of petitions and the like, the only remedy open to you, if you do not wish to submit to it, is to compel him to retrace his steps by suffering in your own person, i.e., by inviting the penalty for the breach of the law. Hence, Satyagraha largely appears to the public as civil disobedience or civil resistance. It is civil in the sense that it is not criminal.

* * *

The criminal, i.e., the ordinary lawbreaker breaks the law surreptitiously and tries to avoid the penalty; not so the civil resister. He ever obeys the laws of the state to which he belongs, not out of fear of the sanctions, but because he considers them to be good for the welfare of society. But there come occasions, generally rare, when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonour, he then openly and civilly breaks them and quietly suffers the penalty for their breach. And in order to register his protest against the action of the law-giver, it is open to him to withdraw his co-operation from the state by disobeying such other laws whose breach does not involve moral turpitude. In my opinion, the beauty and efficacy of Satyagraha are so great and the doctrine is so simple that it can be preached even to children. It was preached by me to thousands of men, women and children, commonly called indentured Indians, with excellent results.

* * *

When the Rowlatt Bills were published, I felt that they were so restrictive of human liberty that they must be resisted to the utmost. I observed, too, that the opposition to them was universal among Indians. I submit that no state, however despotic, has the right to enact laws which are repugnant to the whole body of the people, much less a Government guided by constitutional usage and precedent,

such as the Indian Government. I felt, too, that the oncoming agitation needed a definite direction, if it was neither to collapse nor to run into violent channels. I ventured therefore to present Satyagraha to the country, emphasising its civil resistance aspect. And as it is purely an inward and purifying movement, I suggested the observance of fast, prayer and suspension of all work for one day—the 6th of April.

The Theory and Technique

Gandhi's great conviction in respect of Satyagraha and the plan of direct action that he at times pursues as a part of the technique is that "the appeal of reason is more to the head, but the penetration of heart comes from the suffering." It opens the inner understanding in men, directly breeds no ill-will. It brings you and your opponent as equally together under a common banner as it may have separated them a moment ago under rival flags. In Satyagraha numbers do not count and success counts not to the majority but to the minority, not to the physically strong but to the morally powerful. Just as there is a crisis in the course of a disease which marks the beginning of recovery, even so, in the course of Satyagrahic upheaval there are crises, which are sudden in onset, unexpected in their character and pervading in their range which bring about abiding results. After all war is meant to whip up nations through the physical element and non-violent war would naturally mean the whipping up of human thoughts and feelings by stimulating the emotional elements. Long years ago, Gandhi himself had pointed out that without Civil Disobedience, great wrongs could not be righted, and it was in this view that his great Salt Satyagraha was embarked upon eight years after he had made that statement. In

physical war, it is the infliction of injury that stirs up the physical forces of society, but in a non-violent war it is one's own suffering that stimulates social and spiritual forces and generate social and spiritual power. To a willing man who invites suffering, there is no injury done. Great men sang the praises of war in the past but then they were ignorant of the potentialities of its alternative—non-violent war. Gandhi rejoices that it has been possible for him to discover in his own life-time that a saintly worker like Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan has succeeded in converting the military-minded and martial Pathans,—100,000 of them, into non-violent soldiers and servants of war.

Pacifism vs. Satyagraha

It is necessary at some stage or other in our study of non-violence to make a reference to the Pacifist movement of Europe and America and make a comparative study of the two movements. Referring to the action of the Congress in 1940 under the leadership of Gandhi, Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India said:

> I want to be quite clear that this is not a campaign merely to preach the doctrine of Pacifism. The Viceroy was willing to concede to Mahatma Gandhi and his followers the same rights of expressing conscientious opinion about the war in general as in England.

Gandhi has claimed the right for the nation—not merely for himself and his followers—to determine whether India shall or shall not join the war—and to preach against all war aid. This distinction has become all the more urgent in view of the definite attitude taken up by the Indian National Congress that non-violence shall regulate the conduct of Indian Swaraj—even after

Swaraj has been established. The creed of the Indian National Congress has so far limited the operation of non-violence to the attainment of Swaraj by all *peaceful and legitimate means*. The resolution of the All-India Congress Committee passed in Bombay on the 15th and 16th September, 1940 has extended the domain of non-violence to Swaraj after its attainment as well. In fact, the subject was the bone of contention between Gandhi and the members of the Working Committee in their deliberations over the affairs of the Congress in relation to war—in the months of June, July and August, and the definite offer of military aid to the British in the war, by the Working Committee on condition that Britain acknowledged India's Independence and formed a Central National Government on a satisfactory basis, created a wide chasm between Gandhi and the Congress and the latter absolved the former for the time being of all responsibility for the policy of the Congress. In Bombay the whole position was changed and Gandhi not only succeeded in securing a reversal of the reactionary policy embodied in the Poona Resolution of the A. I. C. C. (July 1940) offering military aid, but also secured the assent of the A. I. C. C. to the adoption of non-violence in the conduct of the Central Government's affairs. But there occurs a reference to disarmament which perhaps may serve to weaken the hold of the principle of non-violence in the resolution. It must be admitted that disarmament is to non-violence as pacifism is to Satyagraha. Disarmament savours of something associated with pacifism.

Western Pacifists

Since the days of Jeremiah, the prophet and first

pacifist in history, there has been a struggle against wars. Mr. C. E. M. Joad, a pronounced pacifist has upheld the war in a B. B. C., speech in 1940. The pacifist opposes war by all means but when once it is declared, he supports it. It may be not all pacifists do it. The pacifists talk of their sacred duty to do all in their power to preserve their nation from the horrors of war. But when the war breaks out, they support the Government. Bryan did so and the fact of men like Bryan and Joad joining a war would have the effect of making the war "unavoidable and righteous." The pacifist is apt to shift the blame on to the Government, and the votary of disarmament on to other Governments. Non-violence begins with itself. It does not look to an external agency for taking the initiative. With non-violence as the keynote of the future social order, the programme of action begins with oneself, spreads to one's family, extends to society and pervades the State in its internal as well as international affairs. Indeed it is the humble citizen that can set the pace for the high and mighty. The latter are far too entangled in the meshes of the State, in the coils and moils of Government to extricate themselves therefrom and take a new view altogether of life and society. It is often suggested that what is good for family and society may not hold water in respect of international affairs. On the contrary, if each nation disciplines itself through its foremost men on the new lines, the application of the principle on the wider scale would meet with few obstacles. All that is required is that it should not be presented as a hypothesis or a theory, but as an experiment that has proved successful, an experience to be depended upon, as a result to be measured in tangible terms. When such a demonstration

of individual cases can be given, the issue will be at once raised from the problematical to the "probableatical" if we may coin such an expression.

Gandhi's scheme of Satyagraha has been further distinguished from the cult of the Pacifists of the West by the fact that the latter is wanting in its aggressive element. That is why it is said:

> it does not command universal and wide-spread support. It is not the exacting demands that it makes, that causes its rejection, so much as that these demands appear too low.

The Rev. Jack C. Winslow points out how

> the pacifist seems to many Christians guilty of an indifference to moral wrongs, which falls short of the highest quality of righteousness and love. They ask for action, which will reflect more closely the relentless antagonism of the Divine Holiness to every form of evil.

Gandhi's Satyagraha goes farther for

> to refrain, not only from all violence, but from all ill-will and bitter thought against an opponent, and to seek continually to win him by love and self-suffering, is the essence of Satyagraha.

Satyagraha means to Gandhi as Rufus M. Jones puts it, "the manifestation of an energy no less real than that which breaks through a dynamo and operates with notable effects." Where does the energy come from? From the Dynamo? No.

> The dynamo does not *create* the energy; it lets it 'come through.' Somewhat so is the person who exhibits 'soul force'—the organ of a deeper life than his own tiny, limited, finite sources of strength. The man's soul in its depth-life opens into boundless reservoirs of larger Life and Power, inexhaustible fountains of Love, Truth and Wisdom which under right conditions, may stream out through him.

> Gandhi's whole life is a battle—battle against machinery, against cruelty to man and beast, against the spirit of domination,—all with his non-violence which in his own words, blunts the edge of the enemy's weapons, disappoints the enemy's expectation. The enemy is at first dazzled but in the end converted.

Satyagraha was defined twenty years ago (1919) by Gilbert Murray as

> battle of the unaided human soul against overwhelming material force and it ends by the units of material force gradually deserting their own banners and coming round to the side of the soul.

Twenty years later, (1939) he writes again that

> Satyagraha wins its battles because of its secret appeal to the spiritual element in its enemy, that humane element from which man, in his utmost effort to be brutal, cannot quite shake himself free.

It is one thing for quakers, philosophers and fellow-saints to shower praises on Satyagraha but in an age of violence and warfare to the common man, Satyagraha is as strange a weapon as a steel knife in the stone age or the petrol engine in the midst of hand carts. People simply cannot understand it, do not believe in it, will not look at it. It is such masses that have imbibed the cult of Satyagraha and are loyal to its tenets.

Gandhi's technique lies in transforming non-violent resistance into an instrument for the maintenance of liberty and peace in the world. Clearly as R. F. Alfred Hoernle has aptly said :

> one clue to the secret of his power over others is his power over himself. By his self-abnegation he has demonstrated

> to a doubting world brought up in its own traditions of a tooth for a tooth and a nail for a nail, that his teachings are based upon a fundamental truth of human nature, may be latent for the none. Only his own shining example is enough to allay all doubts.

How Satyagraha triumphs over the opponent is tersely and tellingly described by R. F. Alfred Hoernle in the following words :—

> As a moral—not a physical weapon, it raises political warfare to a higher plane. Groups powerless in a political and military sense can fall back upon it as their only weapon. It involves self-chosen suffering and humiliation for the resisters and thus demands in them unusual resources of self-mastery and strength of will. If it is effective, it is so by working on the consciences of those against whom it is being used, sapping their confidence in the exclusive rightness of their case, making their physical strength impotent and weakening their resolution by insinuating a sense of guilt for the suffering they have a part in causing.

Testimony of Western Savants

No better testimony to Gandhi's overpowering mastery over men could be cited than the pious pilgrimage of a concourse of Christain statesmen of the world to Wardha in order "to learn at the feet of Gandhi how they might follow Christ better." What an admonition from the master when he said "you cannot serve God and Mammon both and my fear is that Mammon has been sent to serve India and God has remained behind."

Gandhi detests a religious organization being drenched with money and he himself narrated to the working committee on the eve of the Salt Satyagraha in 1930 how in South Africa he had a Caravan of three

thousand to support and not a copper in his pocket. He was getting on eminently well until Gokhale, contrary to his instructions sent a cheque for Rs. 25,000 from Sir Ratan Tata and he had to stop it because when money came his miseries began. Gandhi is not baffled by the magnitude of the opposition.

> We must not despair of touching the hearts even of gangsters, even though for the moment, we may be appearing to be striking our heads against a stone wall.

Gandhi's recommendation, to the Jews in Germany to defend themselves by Satyagraha is the first example of the daring lengths to which Gandhi can go in the application of his new science to conditions overseas.

> No Jew need feel helpless if he takes to the non-violent way. Even if one Jew acted thus and said 'we shall suffer at their hands they knew no better. But we shall suffer not in the manner in which they want us to suffer,' he would save his self-respect and leave an example which, if it became infectious would save the whole of Jewry and leave a rich heritage to mankind besides.

Regarding China, Gandhi deplores that "it is unbecoming for a nation of 400 millions, a nation as cultured as China, to repel Japanese aggression by resorting to Japan's own methods."

The same remedy Gandhi has suggested to the Czechs whose mines and factories are occupied by the Germans. He has faith in Hitler and Mussolini as much as in Churchill and Amery. Only the British must be able to present clean hands to the Fascists, even as we must to the imperialists if non-violence should triumph.

His "Letter to every Briton" in June 1940 to lay down arms against Germany written and sent

even before the fall of France but published only after the fall, may have nothing in history past, present or future to equal it in the daring with which the plan was conceived and the boldness which characterized its execution. In this letter, Gandhi offered to guide the British in the matter of resisting the Germans non-violently if they would take his advice. Such an offer, such a claim might appear arrogant, but that is the very request made of Gandhi by the Rev. Jack C. Winslow in his appreciation:

> I have found myself much wondering, of late, [says Mr. Winslow] even now, at an age when he is entitled to lay down his armour and prepare in a sannyasi's quiet for his final release, Mahatma Gandhi may not have one closing task, crowning his whole life's work, yet to perform—to take leadership, here in the West, of those unled millions in all the nations of Europe, who long for a righteous and lasting settlement and peace won without strife or hatred, and show us what we must do and what we must suffer that such peace may be achieved.
>
> Satyagraha is not merely a dramatic method of winning freedom and unity for one's country or conquering militarism and warfare or improving a vicious social and economic order. It goes deeper still. It is the principle of the eternal Cross, the principle which says with St. Paul, 'I fill up the sufferings of Christ.' The man who understands something of this true meaning of Satyagraha looks backward down the long vista of history and sees everywhere, all through the slow upward evolution of the race, progress for the type that is destined to survive, bought by the sacrifice and suffering of innumerable individuals. He sees a great principle like that of parent-love, or later social co-operation coming into action, at first feebly and tentatively, later with decisive effect, but always working by the self-subordination of the individual through suffering and death often voluntarily chosen, in order to promote the well-being of others, of progeny for instance or later of fellow-tribesmen.

Satyagraha—its Syllabus

Satyagraha is the science and art of overcoming evil with good. It implies that there is a wrong to be righted and that the way of doing it is not by meeting wrong with wrong or force with force, but that we must forgive where we are abused and forbear where we are beaten so that we may take the suffering on ourselves, in order to chasten the opponent and convert his bitterness into friendship. Our own good-will is what tells and in exercising it, it is up to us not to count its cost. How often do we not come across our women and children in their anger abstaining from food and therefore provoking us to acts of violence against them! Their suffering is not pure because of the embitterment behind it and naturally it generates a reaction of a like kind in us. It is the pure-hearted suffering invited on oneself voluntarily and cheerfully, that works a magic cure of the distemper of the opponent. Man requires to be re-educated to this end. From the alphabet to the doctorate, the syllabus of Satyagraha is new and unfamiliar.

The great tragedy of the modern times is that Christian and pagan, scientist and philosopher, layman and missionary, warrior and statesman are all obsessed with the cult of violence. They worship at the shrine of physical force and consider that whatever they may learn in their libraries and laboratories, whatever they may imbibe in the class room of human intercourse or in the university of life, the last word must rest in the domain of international strife, with the big battalions. Archbishops of Britain and Germany alike pray to the same Christ in accordance with the canons of the same denomination that He may give victory to their imperial-

ism or their Fascism. Moral Force is confined to the Church and bears only rhetorical significance. They little realize how only the philosophy of non-attachment or *nissangathwa* is the dynamo that generates that electro-motive force which we call moral force. If the human body is the most efficient engine that man has yet built producing energy measurable in foot-ponds, the human spirit is a still more efficient engine that generates a high voltage of moral force, measurable neither in volts nor in ampères. And just as the body in flesh and blood requires to sustain its tissues by carefully assorted assimilable food, the spirit must be constantly strengthened and re-invigorated by cultivating certain truths and certain principles which occur in all moral catechisms but which rarely enter in the right measure into the make-up of the citizens. A new system of education must be devised which inculcates these principles from the very childhood, through the formative period of adolescence, on to middle age so that when we grow to the height of our manhood, our body ridden by passions may not lust for blood but that our spirit may long for that justice, that liberty and that peace for every man which one desires for oneself and strive to secure for them that have not, these priceless blessings of life.

Accusations against Gandhi

One of the *accusations* against Gandhi—made in no spirit of carping or cavil but by friendly critics, is that he shifts his positions and that too quickly, that he exercises and exhibits a certain subtlety which is broadly inconsistent with his own avowed frankness and freedom from secretiveness. The criticism is not altogether aside of the mark. But to understand the

so-called inconsistencies, we must grasp the real technique of Satyagraha. Satyagraha being bound by rules of non-violence cannot make a distinction between means and ends. They are the same, they must be honourable—both. But a Satyagrahi keeps his hand always out-stretched for co-operation and settlement. If, therefore, in high politics it appears necessary in the midst of a fight to give it up, or in the midst of negotiation, to give up one's prestige, Gandhi is the last man to hesitate. This is the real strength of Gandhi,—this combination of a high religious ideal, with a keen practical sense, this amalgam of saint and statesman, which a poor understanding decries as inconsistency. Satyagraha for a cause is intensely elastic in being ever ready to adapt itself to the changing events, circumstances and attitudes. Gandhi never insists on 'the whole loaf or no bread.' He has often consented to *receive*, without *accepting*, a half loaf. For the other half he never abates his fight, but he will bide his time and opportunity. And his greatest capacity lies in choosing the latter. He knows when to strike and herein he shows the genius of a statesman and warrior. Really it is difficult to state between his saintliness and statesmanship, which is the engine and which the break-van of the train of Satyagraha. Ordinarily we would count the latter the engine and the former the brake. With Gandhi it is the reverse. That is why misunderstanding arises between his followers and his critics. Their standpoints not only vary but are the opposite. Ordinarily the statesman would consider it deep strategy to exploit the distress of the opponent. Gandhi considers it wrong to do so. Gandhi fasts, negotiates and relaxes the fast—Gandhi goes to prison, finds himself released and carries on pourparlers for a settlement. The new-made

convert to Satyagraha sees in it surrender by the leader. The distant cynic has equal cause for raillery and irresponsible criticism from his relentless stand-point of theoretical perfection which knows no 'remorse.' Above all else his critics must understand that every Satyagrahi must be, as Gandhi is, the friend of his enemies,—a paradox to be sure but one of the many paradoxes of life which cannot follow mere law or logic always.

On several vital occasions it is true Gandhi did change his positions as in the course of the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations, the objective and attitude of the Congress in the second great European war now on. Even his devout followers have been struck by some of these mutations but on closer study, it becomes evident that the critics—distant or proximate hostile or friendly, do not always understand the finer aspect of Satyagraha and the high moral obligations it entails on its votaries. When Lord Irwin wanted Gandhi to relax his demand for an enquiry into Police excesses during the Satyagraha campaign of 1930,—a point on which the Working Committee and the nation were alike adamant, he yielded because the Viceroy asked whether the Congress wanted to humiliate him. That resolved all doubts and difficulties. The Working Committee when apprised of the position at 2 A.M., appreciated the delicacy of the situation but the nation was slow in comprehending and remained disconsolate, for it would not mind humiliating the Viceroy who was practically responsible, for the Police Excesses and who in so many words admitted to Gandhi his knowledge and responsibility.

But on vital points there is a rare consistency in Gandhi's attitude on vital principles. Take for instance his attitude in the great war of 1914-18. We all

know how in South Africa when he was leading a campaign against the Colonial Government, he suspended it and helped Government in the Zulu rebellion by organizing an ambulance corps in 1906. In the Great European war of 1914-18 he said, "if I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress resolutions, and not whisper 'Home Rule' or 'Responsible Government' during the pendency of the war." The same magnanimity of spirit has been displayed by Gandhi during the present European War in which he has declared that it is inconsistent with the spirit of Satyagraha to embarrass the enemy during his distress by organizing a campaign of Civil Disobedience, and has acted up to his dictates. As for the bold step Gandhi has taken in his famous and historic letter 'To Every Briton' in which he has put in a plea for the British laying down arms, if any one felt a certain surprise or is even awestruck, let him recall what Gandhi had said in an interview with the correspondent of the New York Times in answer to a call for a message to the world. In recommending a simultaneous disarmament by the democratic powers as a solution, he said:

> I am certain, as I am sitting here, that this would open Hitler's eyes and disarm him.

Were it not for such rare consistency, dignity and daring, would the Viceroy of India have forwarded his appeal "To Every Briton" to the British Cabinet and sent to Gandhi the latter's reply which however disappointing was not unexpected.

Examples of Satyagraha

Various examples of the application of the principle of non-violent resistance, have been cited by authors of books relating to this modern philosophy. One such example was widely quoted and made the means of intensive propaganda, at the time when Non-cooperation Movement itself was started in 1920. The example of Francis Deak of Hungary in offering resistance to the onslaughts of Austria against his motherland, was the most outstanding amongst these. Under the advice of Deak, a programme of national uplift, not materially different to that of Gandhi, was organised to keep down the attempt of the Austrians to attempt a moral conquest of Hungary and it embraced an independent scheme of national education and industry. There too as in India, the jail programme was taken on hand; there too a movement of boycott was inaugurated which led to its being declared illegal; there too as in India, a no-seat campaign in respect of Austrian legislatures was undertaken. Austria's vindictiveness went to the point of imposing conscription upon Hungary and this too was resisted and in the end about the year 1867, Austria succumbed and gave a constitution to Hungary.

We are all acquainted with the famous example associated with the name of Mahatma Gandhi himself, how in 1906 nearly 13,000 people had crossed the border of Natal and settled in the Transvaal in order to resist the legislation relating to finger prints being given by Indians and the production of certificates of registration before any policy officer on demand. This was followed by another movement in 1913 to register an oppressive poll-tax of £3 per capita and a

trek across the border of a large number of people into the Transvaal. People in India remember how during the time of Lord Hardinge, the South-African problem was settled favourably to the Indians on almost every point from the evolution of registration and cancellation of the poll-tax at one end to the right of entry of educated Indians into the different parts of South Africa. Later examples are those of Champaran, where people had to pay sixty-four kinds of taxes to the European planters and were deprived of all their earnings.

Gandhi's campaign of Satyagraha had a very humble origin like all great movements in the world and even when he contemplates a plan on a stupendous scale he deliberately commences it with a very modest beginning. He began his labours in India in 1917 when he secured the abolition of the recruitment of workers under agreement in South Africa. His next achievement was the abolition of the customs cordon at Veerangam without having actually to organise Satyagraha as he had made it clear he would do. The next achievement was in Champaran. It is a long story which we give separately. His success at Champaran enabled him to undertake fresh campaigns but these were of a particularly circumscribed character relating as they did to uplift work in a few villages through the establishment of schools, the preaching of sanitation, the rendering of medical attendance, the promotion of cow protection and so on. The Khaira campaign which was intended to secure remission of taxes and in which mass Satyagraha was used for the first time in India, revealed to him the fact that he could not lightly undertake such campaigns without subjecting people to rigorous training and making sure of their full grasp

of the principles of Satyagraha. This campaign did not have a very successful ending because he saw the people were not equal to the sacrifices involved but they were awakened to a sense of their rights, but the seeds of a wide scheme of popular education in politics were laid in the Khaira campaign. The immediate achievement was that those who could afford were asked to pay the taxes and in the case of poor people a postponement was given. These early essays in Satyagraha determined Gandhi's decision at last to enter into politics at the Lucknow Congress in the year 1916. In 1918, Gandhi undertook a huge task in engaging himself in a struggle for better wages for the mill workers of Ahmedabad and by their exemplary conduct, forbearance, avoidance of any breach of the peace, absence of molestation against those who returned to work and self-reliance, they enabled Gandhi, despite the fact that he had to undertake a fast as a penance for the fault of some of the workers, to negotiate with the mill owners a handsome increment in the wages allowed to the strikers.* This led the way to the larger Satyagraha in 1919 relating to the Rowlatt agitation and later to the Jalianwallabagh tragedy, the Khilaphat wrong and the struggle for Swaraj.

Similar movements were undertaken for economic as well as agrarian and sometimes even social matters and the uniform success that attended Gandhi's efforts and the efforts of those who carried on the movement under his guidance, forms a landmark in the progress of the non-violence movement in India. The Satyagraha movements of Champaran, Khaira and Borsad

* This has been dealt with in greater detail in the chapter on Technique—*Fasts*.

are also referred to in the "History of the Congress" *in extenso*. Special attention must be invited to the Satyagraha movement in Travancore in order to secure cancellation of the age-long interdiction against untouchables entering certain streets adjacent to Brahmins quarters and a temple. Suffice it to say that after 16 months of struggle the road was opened to all people and small as the reform may look, its magnitude and magnificence are best appreciated only by those who have an intimate knowledge of the state of affairs in Malabar in relation to untouchability then and as well as now. A second point of interest relates to the impressing of labour in the hill districts of Simla by Government officials or Europeans for the purpose of carrying luggage or conveying messages on no wage or nominal wage. The system of impressed labour which is rampant in the States all over India was noticeable in these places as well and by a rigid Satyagraha this was cancelled after several months' struggle. The most notable amongst the agrarian struggles was that of the Bardoli and Chersada Taluks in 1928 which was directed against the periodical resettlement of land taxation on a basis which was ultimately proved to be wrong and the proposed 25% increment was reduced to 6¼% as per the recommendation of a tribunal which was appointed by way of settlement, to terminate the campaign organized under the leadership of Vallabahi Patel. This episode of Bardoli stands out in modern history as a shining example to posterity. The Ahmedabad Mills strike was undertaken so early as in 1917 and it called forth a fast from Gandhi of an indefinite character, but the strike was settled erelong. The Nagpur Satyagraha in 1923 drew the attention of whole of India to itself as it had resolved to carry the national

flag through the Civil Lines of the city. The Gurkabad Satyagraha furnished an example of how the Sikhs, a war-like race, always armed with Kirpan and most likely to be tempted to use the weapon in hand against the infliction of physical injuries, imbibed the cult of Satyagraha both in letter and spirit and abstained from all violence through a prolonged course of persecution and physical torture. Finally, there was the Salt Satyagraha of 1930. It is now a chapter in modern history and the events connected therewith are like the stories of ancient epics calculated to rouse the best emotions in the men and women of India on the highest planes of truth and non-violence.

The psychology of Satyagraha

The one point that we have to consider in connection with the various movements that have been taken on hand from time to time in order to effect social, agrarian and moral reforms through a campaign of Satyagraha is the process and the psychology that lie behind the operation of this weapon. The object of the campaign is to stimulate the finest emotions in man. We should fill him with a sense of shame, at the wrongs done by himself, and generate in him a sense of moral uplift and awakening. The absence of retaliation when injury is inflicted, nay, the positive good humour displayed by the victim creates an element of surprise and wonderment in the offender and for the first time opens out his mind to a wide vista abounding in chances of relief to be obtained through sources other than violence. Ordinarily the infliction of violence by one against another, injures the violent man as much as the victim. As every one of us has seen in our lifetime when we

beat a child or beat an adversary, there is a sense of disgust with ourselves following our outburst of passion. In a person whose callousness is not complete and who still possesses a moral sensitiveness, not often the play of anger and the loss of temper create a sense of fatigue or ennui making him incapable of addressing himself to any serious task mental or bodily, immediately after. Distress is often the constant recurrence of same thought to one's mind. Even if the thought is pleasurable, its constant play before the mind is a source of concern and even confusion to the person that entertains it, disturbing all tranquillity by day and all repose by night. The adverse effects of distress are all the greater since the thought is one which brings mortification to one's own mind at the wrong done by oneself. One must seek relief from this constant sense of oppression only by tendering to the person injured or by allowing the thoughts to be choked through the lapse of time. Both are calculated to awaken in the offender a sense of right and a feeling of shame over the wrong done by himself. But the former is a positive, helpful reaction, while the latter is a passive process which is easily capable of degenerating into a certain callousness in the offender in due course. It is not only the patient endurance in a spirit of good humour and good cheer by the victim that kindles a consciousness of one's own wrong in the offender but the people that gather round about, their attitude, their admonitions and their moral resentment operate as equally potent forces against his brutality and help to open out his mind to the panorama of non-violence.

Indeed it has been said that between the man that inflicts injury and him that invites it, the former progressively gets weaker and as he becomes weaker and

weaker in respect of physical violence with which he has started, his sensitiveness and suggestibility and emotional receptivity become keener and keener. A new vista is opened out before him and the longer he continues the more pressing is the reaction upon his mind. No non-violent man can fail to impress his violent opponent with his superior moral force, his spirit of forgiveness and patient endurance accompanied by not so much as a word of resentment or an act of reprisal. This was never thought of by the offender as a possibility in his studies, in his thoughts, in his imagination or in his philosophy, if he has any with the result that a sense of regard is created for the sufferer. All violence really arises from cowardice for the man that resorts to it has not the courage to believe that he is right and his right cause will win in a battle of wits or in a warfare of reason and argument. He is oppressed by a fear that he may be defeated and the prospects of his enemy succeeding infuriates him. And the combination of fear, cowardice and anger lead to a certain vicious circle in which cause and effect feed each other. Justice and generosity disappear from such an atmosphere. Intrigue and ill-will grow on the contrary and get a favourable atmosphere for their growth. It is possible to cultivate a good feeling by keeping the mind clear and the heart pure but where these do not prevail even anger and hatred have the knack of producing reaction in oneself provided the instincts of good nature have not been choked off betimes. What is a matter of course to a man whose heart is widely receptive and whose affections are catholic, becomes an artificial culture with a person who wishes to train his character and free himself from the evil influences of which he has become the victim and when the latter feels conscious of his own

moral strength and is confident that he can rise to the level of thinking that he can stand up by himself in supporting his just cause, he succeeds in tapping the hidden sources, the fountain springs of virtue and self-control lying dormant in his own nature. There is always a struggle going on in human nature to conquer the *Arishadvargas* or the six vices of greed, (*Kama*), anger (*Krodha*), miserliness (*lobha*), ignorance (*moha*), infatuation (*mada*) and disgust (*matsarya*) and a little effort is enough to establish that supreme control of mind and conscience over these vices which left to themselves, would soon become masters of one's own personality and overpower him and engulf him altogether. The subdual, therefore of anger, the cultivation of a certain sense of tranquillity, creates an atmosphere favourable to the play of positive virtues such as of kindness, charity, and forgiveness. How often have we not all experienced a desire to do what is wrong and equally the desire to survive the temptation. We know what is good but our inclinations are not able to accept the restraints imposed by it upon ourselves. The natural desire of everyone to be virtuous, truthful and moral, to be brave, generous and forgiving, to be serviceable, altruistic and self-sacrificing, is a quality—indeed it is the quality—upon which we build up the whole theory of Satyagraha. These qualities may not be as aggressive as the opposite qualities of untruth, violence, anger and hatred. There is a constant interplay of forces, a kind of moral mesmerism between the injurer and the injured and the Satyagrahi should do nothing which dulls the edge of these forces. The violent man's emotions are like a torrent flowing from a great height. They present a down-pour of words and blows and activities which

advertise the person's excitement and uncontrollability. While this is so, the balance and the tranquillity, the patience and the forgiveness of the non-violent, give extent as well as depth to his feelings likening them to the waters in the bed of a river before its confluence with the sea waters, which spread themselves over a vast area and reach great depths because they have to absorb the onrush of the flood tide of all those angry, torrential, water-falls of the *duragarhi* emanating from all directions. It is in the depths of this river that we have to look for the precious stones of life, it is from them that we have to find solutions for the conflicts that have all been poured into this bottomless reservoir. It is not possible to find a solution for problems when men are angry and have no sense of proportion or propriety or perspective. A little patience would help the solution better by helping understanding and judgment. All the finest emotions in man have a prospect of full play only under the inspiration of love and under its radiating influence but not under the choking effect of anger. And as this feeling of love for all develops, as the *real* approaches the *ideal* more and more, as the *will* obeys the *emotion*, conduct becomes determined not by a close and calculating reasoning, nor by a cold weighing of the pros and cons of each subject, but by a certain *instinct* which operates from within, which really dawns upon one's mind with a certain suddenness and clarity which reason and judgment always lack. That is why Gandhi has always placed his conclusions before his followers and left it to them to clothe them with logic. The highest development, therefore, of a Satyagrahi who has cast off fear and desire, anger and hatred, selfishness and intrigue, is the development of instinct as against reason,

principle against expediency and ethics as against 'politics.'

The Play of Instinct

It is not in non-violent warfare alone that the leader decides by instinct. Instinct plays an equally notable part in warfare of violence as well. Mr. Churchill quotes from a letter from Field Marshall Robertson to General Haig in which the Field Marshall proposes to stick to offensives in the West, (in the last Great European war)—1914-18, "more because *my instinct prompts me* to stick to it, than because of any good argument by which I can support it." Note that the Field Marshall had no argument, but that it is the duty of those lower placed in the military hierarchy to clothe with argument and reason the decisions reached by the Masters above through instinct. The architect discerns, the engineer prepares the plans and estimates, the mason builds. Even so the Field Marshall decides, the Captain executes. The fact is that instinct is only reason sublimated, and is but intellect integrated. It is genius in action.

Satyagraha is not the monopoly of the chosen few, but is the privilege of the untutored many. Narada's advice to Dharma is relevant to the point. It is just as well to quote the exact words of Narada Mahamuni spoken to Dharma Raja, they are as follows:—Narada looked at Dharma Raja and stated that he had learned the Sanatana Dharma from Narayana who was engaged in penance in the Badarika Ashram for the good of the world, being born of the womb of Dakshayani on earth :—

To whatever caste one may belong the following thirty virtues are essential:—Truthfulness, kindness, penance including fasting, purity, tolerance, discretion between good and bad, control of mind, restraint of the external senses, non-violence, celibacy, charity, appropriate meditation, joy, gentleness, quality of treatment, service of the public, abandonment of vulgar desires, giving up of purposeless acts, moderation in talk, introspection of the higher self, distribution of food and water to all living beings, seeing divinity in every living being, acting according to one's conscience and remembering, praising, hearing songs relating to serving, worshipping, saluting, devoting and dedicating oneself to, and befriending to feet of Sree Narayana.

Dharma

It will be thus seen that Satyagraha is not a new code or compendium of virtues. It is the *dharma* prescribed for every man irrespective of his calling or caste. Special *dharmas* are prescribed for special castes, but the category described by Narada represents the common duty of all. The little books that we had to study as soon as we had picked up the alphabet are full of verses which we shall do well to recall for they form the basal principles of Satyagraha.

It is well known how violence is the result of anger and fear, while non-violence can only spring from a sense of forgiveness. Fear is a subjective process and anger is objective. The angry man wants some other body for his anger to act upon. The man of fear drives his emotions inwards. The latter is afraid of some thing stronger than himself, while the former wants to vent his emotions against somebody weaker than himself. That is to say whether the reaction in you to a certain enmity is fear or anger, depends upon whether you are consciously weaker or stronger than your op-

ponent. It may be argued that it is all very well to analyse psychological feelings of people based upon experience and upon logic, but that it is not an easy matter to get people to sacrifice themselves in a dispute consciously and deliberately for this, is what is required for Satyagraha. In a mass of soldiers who are out for war and rapine, there is not only the spirit of adventure which stimulates people to unknown activities and which may not altogether fail to be fruitful and profitable but there is the uncertainty of the danger falling to the lot of one or the other. And this very uncertainty operates as a cover against danger or even as guarantee of a possible safety. Not so with a Satyagrahi who goes out deliberately to court suffering and is positive that his chance of suffering is imminent and is real and great. But what may be considered the demerit of Satyagraha constitutes its very strength. Because in that very consciousness of danger, in that very courting of suffering, there is courage and courage is a creative emotion which deepens with a sense of right. It infects your neighbour with its own virus. But on the contrary, the danger that actually happens, though unexpectedly, in an army to a particular soldier creates a sense of fear in the soldiery, breaks their energies and therefore is calculated to destroy the *morale* of the army. The conscious and deliberative aspect of the whole process involved in Satyagraha, operates as a positive incentive to sacrifice in others and this has been witnessed in the batches that came one after another in serried ranks to take their places on the Azad Maidan in Bombay in 1930-32, 33. The sight of blood did not deter them, the dread of injury did not drive them from the battlefield. On the other hand, when a new Commissioner of Police took charge of the city

of Bombay from the old, avowedly to put down the movement in the Azad Maidan, the steps adopted by the new officer consisted in beating the people upon their heads not merely upon the bodies, and as the head is the most 'bloody' organ in the human body, one too in which particularly a Lathi blow acting upon the skin and flesh against hard bone sets up huge spouts of blood jetting out in *massive* streams, it drew forth thousands of spectators, to the arena. Now the sight of blood is to the courageous man an incentive to entering the battlefield, while to the coward, it is a deterrent. The result of the new officer's tactics only served to increase the batches of each day and swell the numbers of the spectators from 5,000 people to 25,000 ere-long. And each batch that entered the battlefield and came into contact with the soldiers' violence created a spirit not merely of imitation but of emulation in the succeeding batch. It was thus that Satyagraha became irresistible in the year 1930.

But the subject may be studied from the standpoint of the soldier or the policeman who is to meet the Satyagrahi. Very often in the battlefield, when the soldier is asked to fire by telephonic orders issued from behind by the Field Marshal who is twenty to hundred miles away from the firing line, the soldier himself does not see the object of his shooting but is simply asked to fire at an angle of 30 or 40 degrees *point blanc* and it is for the scientific men who watch the process of shooting either from above or from below to determine, how far this violence is effective. As a matter of fact except, as rarely happens, when the soldier comes to a hand to hand fight with fellow soldiers of the hostile camp, exchanging blows with sword and stick, the soldiers don't really see anything of real

battle. Not so, however, when the soldier or policeman is called upon to hit in cold blood the Satyagrahi who obeys all rules and laws, who receives all blows piously, who puts on a cheerful countenance and who remains unperturbed throughout the whole process of the attack. The soldier feels really a sense of shame, sorrow and surprise over such a performance of his and all these three emotions would act upon him and he begins to wonder why he has been called up to do this kind of attack upon people unarmed, inoffensive and unmoved. It was thus that the Ghariariwalah soldiers refused to fire and have been sentenced to fourteen years imprisonment during the course of 1930-32 campaign. In jails whenever a prisoner is to be lathi charged, it is not the warder who has a wife and children that deals the blows with the lathi upon the back of prisoners but it is the convict warders sentenced to long terms of imprisonment who are duly raised to such positions and who had more ruthlessly murdered their brothers for a share of property or were engaged in some much more immoral and nefarious crimes. Their sense of right and wrong is of much lower order than that of the warder. Likewise it is believed that policemen are likely to be much more humane than soldiers, because the policemen have families of their own. They are dealing with young men and women who are Satyagrahis and by their feelings of generosity and kindness, are drawn out when they are called upon to belabour men and women without really any provocation or act of immorality on the part of the Satyagrahis who are fighting for their country—a country which is the common motherland of the policemen and his victim. Thus it is seen that the process of Satyagraha, like war, is merely a process of trying to break alike the energies

and the courage and the morale of the opponent. When the soldier or the policeman begins to doubt the justice of his job, he is almost finished. He can no longer discharge his duties. His will weakens, his purpose fails. On the other hand, the reaction in the Satyagrahi is of the opposite character. Every time that he suffers and faints and recovers consciousness and rises and receives blows and falls again, every time, he is more and more keenly conscious of the measure of courage that is in him, of the endurance that he is displaying, of the infection of these qualities of courage and endurance which is rapidly spreading to his neighbour and of the great chances of victory that are becoming better guaranteed in the near future. The suffering is viewed with a sense of supreme satisfaction by those that invite it, but with trepidation and reluctance by those that inflict it. Thus as the process goes on, the chances of success of the Satyagrahi multiply while the chances of the breakdown of the apostles of violence are proportionately increased. When the soldier's courage fails, when doubt begins to dawn upon his mind, his judgment becomes sharper and he who has hitherto been taught to accept the judgment of the Field Marshal, begins to wonder whether he is right in facing his job. In other words, he is overborne by a sense of duty not to his commander but to the man opposite, indeed, his duty, what is true right and just. He begins to exhibit fair-play and this is the beginning of the success of the Satyagrahi. That is why the policeman who is still wavering between his sense of right and his duty to his boss, slackens in his work of violence intermittently. Only, in order that the Satyagrahi may succeed, he must display discipline of the most stringent character.

There is a certain belief that the masses may not bend to discipline. But the truth is that the masses observe discipline much better than those who are sophisticated by a certain measure of English education and University training. Here the faith is flagging, while there the faith remains firm. Here with the educated classes, logic and reason, history, chances of success, the tradition of violent war, the novelty of Satyagraha, doubts about truth and discipline in non-violence itself—all these operate as deterring factors. While the man of the street receives instructions by faith and renders them into practice without any of the sophistications that fall to the lot of the educated man. And too, there is the fact that non-violent war must make its progress not by rapid marches but by a series of steady fights in which each preceding struggle serves as an incentive to the succeeding campaign. The remedy of non-violence acts in Satyagraha as a Homeopathic dose, not Allopathic. And the treatment always ends in a settlement. It may not be the final settlement but is a stepping-stone to it. Therefore, there is not that fight to a finish and war to a victory—such as the promoters of violence and bloodshed always swear by. There is on the other hand, a certain incompleteness in the results of the Satyagraha which must be made up in due course by a steady renewal of the fight, although, however, it is not necessary to take every step in progress by a renewed fight and repeated struggle of equal intensity. After a certain state, the claims of Truth and non-violence become overpowering and irresistible. The last stage of the fall of evil does not take as long as the earlier stages, just as when you are felling a tree, it takes enormous time to axe three-fourths of the trunk while the remaining one-fourth is broken

by one jerk of the rope tied at the top or one blow with the butt end of the axe at the bottom.

Satyagrahi's Advantages

Satyagraha has all the accepted advantages of war without any of its disadvantages. We can retain the initiative with ourselves. Our efforts such as they may be, are an end in themselves for success and failures are but relative terms to the Satyagrahi, every 'failure' being a stepping-stone to success and every success being but the climax and crowning point of a series of 'failures.' Our settlements such as they may be, do not lead to the harbouring of vengeance and vendetta and operate in promoting good will and right understanding unlike the treaties that conclude wars, which are only the seed beds of later wars inevitably. Above all we do not degrade or demoralize ourselves in the fight as we must in a war of violence. And what is more, we seek to lift our opponent from the slough of wickedness and the mire of vengeance into which he has fallen. Defeated as he may be, he emerges from the Satyagrahic war chastened, uplifted, purified and bears no ill-will to his enemy—namely to the Satyagrahi who had all along invited suffering on himself—not inflicted any on his opponent.

Objections to Satyagraha

Law and Order with an Imperialist nation—mean freedom to exploit the subject and backward nations. To offer non-violent resistance to the laws of a State is not, therefore, a subversion of Law and Order, for the resister is for a more lawful and more orderly society

than the one in which *might* prevails over *right*. It is not as if like the communists, the non-violent resister is playing for disorder through a programme of violence. He is straining every nerve not only to subdue the rule of *might* and rehabilitate the Reign of Law, but has always got a constructive programme. A state reconstructed on such a positive programme is bound to present greater unity and fellowship. Just as violence works in a *vicious circle*, injury causing irritation and irretation leading to injury, even so non-violence works in a *virtuous circle*, service promoting good will, and good will intensifying service. Just when the South African struggle was going its second round, a strike broke out amongst the European Railwaymen in South Africa. Gandhi saw that the Government was in a very difficult situation, but instead of taking advantage of the incident he chivalrously suspended the Indian struggle until the Railway strike was over—an act which won much admiration for the Indians.

Thus a State built upon the firm foundations of non-violence would not only be united but would be constantly sustained by the spirit of service and sacrifice that animates its citizens. To achieve such results there are certain irreducible conditions. They are the observance of truth and non-violence. A man who is not saturated with a sense of sincerity may not entertain abiding faith in his cause and method, through all the sufferings, ignominies and humiliations to which he is subjected, and which would agonize him the more because they are worse in his case than in the case of criminals and culprits. Supreme faith in non-violence is indispensable to the pursuit of Satyagraha. To say that the masses will not observe the legitimate limits is no argument against the scheme, for if they did not

do so, the leader would know what to do. The Chauri Chora incident in which twenty-one constables and a Sub-Inspector were burnt alive in the Police Station where they hid themselves led to a suspension of the whole movement in February 1922. The fact nevertheless remains that administrators like Sir Harry Haig—Home Member of the Government of India, and journalists like Mr. George Slocombe of the *Daily Herald* bore unstinted testimony to the scrupulous observance of non-violence in the vast majority of cases in Gandhian movements. It must also be noted that one case of violence is better advertised and very correctly too, than a thousand cases of non-violence. These masses are according to Carlyle, an "inflammablest, immeasureablest material." It is therefore all the more necessary to safeguard movement associated with them against violence. Therefore a rigid training from the outset, a strict course of disciplines and a great deal of mental and moral education are an essential part of the preparation for Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha. It is the individual conscience and the public opinion that are sought to be stimulated and once awakened they are a better constabulary than all the laws of Government which cannot prevent crimes but can only punish them. When people are thus trained and disciplined, when their thoughts and intentions are controlled and curbed, when at every stage their movements are directed and superintended, when their means and ends are required to be taken together as one and indivisible, when their aim and purpose are sought to be kept pure and unsullied, the whole process operates as a unifying factor in the first place and in the second as a source of energy, love and service.

Gandhi's Handling of the Machine

Gandhi's handling of the machinery of Satyagraha is swift and sudden. He inaugurates a campaign under the spell of a call from within. He winds it up or suspends it under a like influence. In April 1939, he called off all the Civil Disobedience campaigns in India, in Rajkot, in Tranvancore, Hyderabad and Jaipur and explaining the situation, he wrote on the 1st of April 1939 as follows :—

> In Satyagraha there is no such thing as disappointment or heart-burning. The struggle always goes on in some shape or other till the goal is reached. A Satyagrahi is indifferent whether it is civil disobedience or some other phase of the struggle to which he is called. Nor does he mind if, in the middle of the civil disobedience march, he is called upon to halt and do something else. He must have faith that it is all for the best. My own experience hitherto has been that each suspension has found the people better equipped for the fight and for control over forces of violence. Therefore, in advising suspension, I dismiss from my mind the fear that it may lead to desertion and disbelief. If it does, I should not feel sorry, for it would be to me a sign that the deserters did not know what Satyagraha was and the movement was better without those who did not know what they were doing.

Gandhi made a clean breast of his own sense of "guilt," next week in "being over-confident and hasty in launching Civil Disobedience campaigns but he felt that no harm seemed to have accrued to the country because he had always his hand on the pulse of the country and he had no hesitation in retreating the step taken if he scented danger or discovered an error of judgment or calculation."

Once Satyagraha is withdrawn people do not lapse

into idleness. They immediately engage themselves, and join those comrades who during the period of fight were engaged, in the Constructive Programme.

The Satyagraha programme is not a D.C. (Direct Current) but an A.C. (Alternate Current) programme with 'make' and 'break' operating in alternation. When you fight you break, when you reconstruct you make. Civil Disobedience and the Constructive Programme as the alternate 'break' and 'make' and are eternally operating one way or the other. To the untutored many who want fireworks throughout the year, not on a *Deepavali* day only, it may look as though steadiness is wanting and it is felt merely that Gandhi comes and goes. The immediate effect, when he 'comes' is revolutionary doubtless, but when he 'goes' the lasting effect comes into operation and leaves a layer of alluvium upon all saline soil so as to fertilize it. The general level is raised and quality improved. It is therefore wrong to expect any one of his followers to rise to his level. You cannot expect aught except that the nearest area is raised higher and fertilized better than the farther areas. Gandhi makes ministries and unmakes them. Ministers resign. Gold is put in fire and then hammered and must be put into fire again—and again hammered. So it is not one dull monotony, one uniform programme with Gandhi. Gandhi's instinct guides the Nation just as the Electric ray guides the aeroplanes at night.

The soul force by which Gandhi works and which he hopes to liberate in every individual is like the air force of the atmosphere that in Dunlop tyres supports tons of weight, that bears up easily birds weighing 10 to 30 lbs., in the high air, that sustains mighty aeroplanes, that wafts away to a distance huge roofs in a cyclone,

uproots massive trees and works wonders like the waves of the sea, like the whirls of an eddy. It is available everywhere and to every person. Only he must become aware of it, he must learn to put it to use. He must press it into service and know how to give it control over himself. Take a cyclist. He handles a pump and inflates his tube. The air at high pressure in the tube is no more visible than the air in the atmosphere. Yet the tube within the tyre and the rim and wheel stand a speed of 12 miles per hour and sustain a weight of 200 lbs. *How does it get this power*. How does it get all this power? The untutored mind is unable to conceive it and when it is demonstrated to him, is unable to comprehend it. But a little practice gives the conception as well as the comprehension—not merely to a scientist, nor even to a mechanic but to every urchin going about biking. Let us then study soul force—understand its elements and its compounds, acquire a trained sensibility and we shall ere long become adepts in its use, yea, experts. This is Satyagraha, simple yet effective, sublime yet practicable, high soaring yet universal. It is not a secret power but an open sesame. It is not a magic but a marvel. It is not a mystery but a miracle. It is not a *thanthra* but a *manthra*. It is not an invention but a revelation.

PART III

CHAPTER IV

SATYAGRAHA—ITS RELATION TO WAR

The study of the past twenty years of life and activities of Gandhi reveals how great an evolution has taken place in his conceptions and ideas of reacting to a war in the State of which he is a subject and is a participant. It is well known how during the South African War as well as on the outbreak of Zulu Rebellion, he assisted in organising ambulance corps giving up his campaign against Government on the second occasion in order not to embarrass Government in South Africa. In the Great-War of 1914-18, he found himself in England and it was with great difficulty that he was prevented from enlisting himself as a combatant. His faith in the soundness of the heart of the Englishman was then still unshaken. He would not be in a party to making any political demands while the English were in difficulties even in 1914. He would attribute all the misdeeds of the bureaucrats in India to individual vagaries, not to decadence of British national character. He began to recruit volunteers for a Red-Cross organisation and gathered eighty friends for the purpose. When invited in 1918 to the War Conference by Lord Chelmsford, he promised to recruit for the army and strenuously attempted to gather recruits accordingly. He was confronted with the question how he would reconcile his principles of Ahimsa with this positive and active participation in war effort and his answer was that

being a direct sharer in violence on account of the fact of being protected by the British, he had only to visualise before himself either complete opposition or complete co-operation. His powers of opposition had not been yet developed and therefore he cast in his lot with co-operation. This was not a little embarrassing to his followers. Speaking in London as well as in India, he supported participation in war effort as sound strategy. He was satisfied that it was not for any sordid gain,—national or otherwise, that he was shaping his conduct in that particular manner. It was really in the interests of non-violence as he believed, for he wanted to overcome evil with good. He drew a distinction between the pacifists of England and himself :—

> European war-resisters must recognise a vital difference which exists between them and me. They do not represent the exploited nations; I represent the most exploited nation in the world. They represent the cat and I, the mouse. Has the mouse a feeling in favour of non-violence only? Has it not the instinctive desire to defend itself violently and successfully, before it has been possible to teach it the virtue, the grandeur, the superiority of the law of non-violence in the domain of war? Is it not perhaps necessary for me, as the representative of the 'mouse' tribe, to share in its desire for violent destruction, with the very object of teaching it the superiority of non-destruction?

He then risked his own popularity by his participation in war effort. The times were not ripe as yet to appreciate his aloofness from war effort but as time advanced his ideas changed. About ten years of Satyagraha and propaganda relating to it, enabled him to stay in 1929 with authority what he has since been teaching on principle :—

I trust my private judgment in favour of duty of an ordinary citizen. My position is wholly different now. I have become by force of circumstances a teacher of non-violence. I claim to enforce my teaching in my own life to the best of my ability and I feel that I have the strength to resist war in my own person.

In these passages which were written in the year 1929, he made it clear that his attitude was one of opposition to war as a matter of course. He had the necessary social status which gave him the competence to proffer this opposition and too, there was a wide and real awakening of the people which enabled them to receive these ideas with readiness and with advantage. In 1938, he made it clear at the time of the Munich Pact that he was no good to the Congress as the leader that could negotiate with the British Government any privileges for India on the basis of participation in war. And in '39-40, he has carried this attitude to the very climax. He has sought to be absolved from all responsibility of leadership when at Poona the All India Congress Committee resolved to offer material aid to the Government in return for declaration of India's independence and the establishment of national government at the centre satisfactory to all the parties in the Central legislature and acceptable to the various provincial responsible governments. Later, he got the resolution reversed in Bombay at the meeting of the A.I.C.C. held on the 15th and 16th of September, 1940 and has since organised the Civil Disobedience movement on a very limited scale putting forward Vinoba Bhave as the first Satyagrahi in the field on the 17th October.

Non-violence and War

Dr. Pierre Ceresole who has brought the Inter-

national Service Civil as a moral equivalent for war and a force potent enough to quench war and done yeoman's service during the Behar Earthquake of 1934, was in South Africa in 1914 and spoke in 1936 about Gandhi as follows :—

> Your teacher and your leader Mahatma Gandhi is not only yours but of all humanity. We see in the work and spirit represented by the Mahatma a better way for the solution of the world's evils. There is an incident in his life that struck me most forcibly. You perhaps know that just at the time when he was engaged in the passive resistance struggle on behalf of the Indians in South Africa there was a strike by the white workmen there. It was easy for him to profit by the strike. Government's difficulty might have been his opportunity, but he would not seek to profit by their embarrassment. He postponed the struggle. Well, that was superhuman.
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> Twenty-two years ago, [he went on], I never dreamt that I should be going to India to serve her. I was an engineer, physicist and mathematician. I spent my time reading, writing, calculating. The great war was a terrific experience in which all our cherished principles were trodden under foot and the spiritual and moral sides of life were utterly ignored. The basic principle of Christianity was lost sight of.

Gandhi's unexpected turn

Gandhi whose ways are well understood by his followers, has proved somewhat difficult to follow on account of what the latter considered to be his impractical attitude in the war in respect of a non-violent State. But there is nothing inconsistent in that attitude though there is much that is unexpected. Gandhi on the outbreak of war promised moral co-operation on his own behalf to the British and declined to speak for the Congress. The Congress itself took later a definite attitude and when

after the Delhi meeting of the Working Committee in July 1940, the Congress offered material aid in return for a declaration by Britain of India's Independence and the establishment of a National Government, Gandhi felt called upon to be absolved from its leadership. Indeed he had asked for and got it even earlier when the Working Committee wobbled on the question of a non-violent State, though it swore by non-violence in so far as the attainment of Swaraj was concerned.

The initial difficulty arose from the fact that Gandhiji was very firm on his ideal of non-violent state. The issue was to him no longer a theoretical one, for, the waggon of India, in his view could no longer be hitched to the star of Britain which was wedded to warfare. If the Indians, after being disarmed from the year 1877—that is, for over a generation, were to resume their long-demanded weapons, their whole mind would travel along a future strewn with the blood of their enemies and themselves: Should India then choose a bloody path or a bloodless path? Her independence, to Gandhiji was not a remote or problematical issue. A national central Government was not a fib of optimistic imagination but an immediate reality.

If we paid the price of armed assistance to Britain for the acknowledgment of our independent status, the real position would be that India was declared free and a free India out of her own unfettered choice, and with eyes wide open, was proffering military and material aid and participation in war effort. What is enforced by Britain on India, what is exacted by Britain from India, might be dismissed as not coming from a free nation, but what is rendered by a free India would bind her for the future.

Gandhiji all the while was not thinking of power.

If anybody feared that he had missed or was missing power, it was his firm belief that while one might get power by non-violence, one could not retain it by violence: all that you could do was to "touch" power. He might for some time concede the police, but he had no mind to concede the military, although all that he asked for, at the time was that the nation should keep an open mind on the matter. It was his belief that we must educate people non-violently. Once you introduced the military, it was the military language that predominated, the military technique and the military remedy. This, apart from the mechanical fact that you won't be able to train armies for 20 years to come! Six thousand officers are about to be trained. What should we do with them? But it was not the officers that worried him so much as the influence they would have upon the masses.

The logic of facts and events embodied herein and ever so forcibly expressed by Gandhiji was irresistible. It was, for one thing, a test of the faith of his colleagues. But there was another aspect of the matter. A decision on this issue must be consistent with the resolutions of the Congress. The Congress, in its creed, only speaks of "the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means." Beyond answering those critics who asked whether India could observe non-violence after attaining Swaraj by the statement,—cryptic and clinching—that what she attains by non-violence, she must be able to keep by non-violence too—beyond this answer, the Congress never has so far applied its mind to the character and maintenance of the Indian State in relation to non-violence. On the other hand, when it was proposed at the Bombay session of the Congress in October 1934, that the words "peaceful and legitimate means"

in Article I, should be replaced by "truth and non-violence," the change was stoutly resisted and it was this resistance that partly and finally accounted for Gandhiji ceasing to be four-anna member of the Congress. In Wardha and Delhi, six years after this refusal by the Congress, Gandhiji sought the support of the Working Committee for a non-violent State divested of all armies,—a State which would resort to non-violence as the sole weapon against external aggression as well as internal disorder.

Congress offer in September 1940

Again tracing the progress of events chronologically, we note that the resolution of the Working Committee on the 14th September, 1939, embodied the principle of co-operation with Britain in the War on certain conditions. What was the co-operation contemplated therein? Let it be remembered that Gandhiji had stated in his first interview with the Viceroy soon after the outbreak of the War that he would offer unconditional co-operation and later explained that what he had offered was *moral* co-operation, not material. It is just possible that on the 14th September when the Working Committee passed its historic resolution on the war that is, hardly a fortnight after its outbreak—the Working Committee and Gandhiji were thinking of two different meanings of co-operation; for it was some time after that Gandhiji explained that his proffered unconditional co-operation was moral in character, and that was in answer to a virtual challenge from a newspaper in London.

The Congress Resolution

'The statement of September 14th, 1939 was clear, it runs thus :—

> If co-operation is desired in a worthy cause, this cannot be obtained by compulsion and imposition and the Committee cannot agree to the carrying out by the Indian people of orders issued by external authority. Co-operation must be between equals by mutual consent for a cause which both consider to be worthy. The people of India have in the recent past faced great risks and willingly made great sacrifices to secure their own freedom and establish a free democratic state in India and their sympathy is entirely on the side of democracy and freedom. But India cannot associate herself in a war said to be for democratic freedom when that very freedom is denied to her and such limited freedom as she possesses taken away from her.

It is evident now that Gandhiji has all along been thinking of only moral co-operation both for himself and for the Congress. The point came up for clarification after the fall of France on 14th June, 1940, so that the atmosphere changed altogether by the time the Working Committee met on the 17th of June at Wardha. The question of non-violence forthwith assumed practical importance. The differences on the issue came out in all their plurality. In July '40 at Delhi the question assumed an added importance by virtue of the practical bearing of the decision on the issue of the demand and the offer to be made, *vis-a-vis* the British Government. Gandhiji stood up for the demand of complete independence being acknowledged then and there by Britain and for the offer of moral support by India in return. The Working Committee agreed with him in respect of the demand but differed in respect of the offer. The difference was really one based

on a principle. It was not a difference based upon any personal element or the attitude of India towards Britain. All were at one in condemning. Fascism as well as Imperialism. If Britain shed the latter—and proved the fact by acknowledging the independence of India—she would be no longer guilty of Imperialism on the one hand and would, on the other, be able to negotiate the co-operation and support of a free India. The sentiment was clearly expressed when Gandhiji said on 4-12-1939, in a cable to the *News Chronicle* :

> I am anxious, as a friend of Britain bound by many personal ties that she should come out victorious—not because of superiority in arms but because of her will to be just all along the line.

It would thus be seen that though Gandhiji and his colleagues agreed that a free India meant well by Britain, yet they differed on the issue as to how a free India should be organised and equipped. Those who would concede the correctness of making the future Free India, a non-violent State, would still halt because the sanction of the Congress was as yet wanting. At the same time everyone could readily see the urgency of the issue as visualized by Gandhi.

Mr. Amery's performance in Aug. 1940

It soon became clear that the Secretary of State, Mr. Amery's performance on the 14th August, 1940 in the House of Commons standing in direct contrast with his promise at Blackpool on the 12th was only a reproduction of the Viceroy's voice in Simla of the 7th August. Mr. Amery lacks altogether a knowledge of the realities of Indian political and public

life as well as the Indian socio-economic structure. He is more like a juror for whom the judge has summed up the case and he is to give the verdict of "guilty." In this case he pronounces India guilty of various misdemeanours, and therefore is unworthy of getting Swaraj. But in his view, the Congress is not the only offender. There are a number of co-accused, who are either abettors or accessories after the event. The Muslim League is still not satisfied because it wants a declaration in favour of Pakistan. The Hindu Maha Sabha, which has now been recognised by the Viceroy in his despatch of 7-8-'40, and therefore stands on a par with the Muslim League and can cross swords with it directly in the arena of Viceregal patronage, has demanded on the contrary a declaration against Pakistan. We might have been prepared to take the Viceroy as well as the Secretary of State at their word; take their offer at their face value giving them the fullest credit for sincerity of purpose. The proof of that sincerity lay not in the eloquence of words but of deeds. Therefore, leaving aside for the sake of argument the subtle distinctions between complete independence and Dominion Status, the fixation of the time limit with which one or the other was to be implemented the crucial question that emerged out of all this was the formation of a National Government, its character, its functions, its powers and its freedom. If the civilians were eliminated that would be the first proof of sincerity of the Viceregal or the British ministerial offer. If they were sincere in their offer of Dominion Status to India in a year after the conclusion of the war, but being so, if they could not get themselves to trust Indians to the point of eliminat-

ing the three civilians from the executive in Delhi and Simla, then even the Liberal League could not countenance the proposals of the day. What the nation in one voice wanted was the elimination of Civilian Government from the country. That has been done in the Provinces. That must be achieved in the Centre. Apart from all legislative changes relating to the constitutional progress of the country the bone of contention between India and Britain was the three civilians,—Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Clow and Mr. Bajpai, that the last is an Indian made no difference to India. It is not a question of Indian versus European but it is a question of civilian versus non-civilian.

We have recounted these facts in order to show the background that lay behind the movement which was fast developing under the auspices of the Congress. The Congress had, in the midst of cavil and criticism from its own younger section and of neglect and contempt at the hands of Government, been maintaining its balance so long. Its patience had been tried sore. Gandhi himself, though he was not actually guiding the Congress, was closely in touch with the National Body and his patience too was almost exhausted, for, he was flooded with literature relating to the compulsory levies that were being imposed upon the country towards war aid. If anybody was rejoicing that Gandhi was not intimately associated with the actual programme of the Congress, he was very much mistaken, for, Gandhi was not the person to take things lying. He might not be in the Congress but he was of the Congress, taking the closest part in shaping the inner counsels and determining their course of conduct. And he never

advised a step which he himself was not prepared to take. It may, therefore, be broadly taken for certain that whatever steps the Congress might take in the direction of a fight, Gandhi would be there to lead it.

Events moved as fast in India as in Europe. In Europe a sanguinary war was raging with varying fortunes and the fates of Nationalities were being weighed in the balance. In India one did not know what the morrow would bring. Satyagraha was on every one's lips. While the more enthusiastic friends in the country were embarrassing the Congress, the acts of the Government of the day were equally baffling. They did not mean business. They had discarded the proffered help of the Congress. The Poona resolution virtually stood scrapped. While matters stood thus, the All India Congress Committee met in Bombay to take the plunge. They of the Congress felt that they were being crushed like a grain between the two stones of a grinding mill or were being cut like the nut between the two arms of a cracker. One good point however in this hour of trial for the Congress was that Gandhi had assumed or resumed leadership. The Poona plans had not fructified. The "rational and sedate group" of the Congress, no longer pressed their plans of co-operation. But the difficulty arose from Gandhi himself. However indignant and therefore distressed he might be over the performances of the Governor General and the Secretary of State, the fact remained that he might not welcome a widespread Satyagraha movement at this juncture. In the first place it ran against his grain. Satyagraha had not been his first choice. If at all, it came, it became his forced choice. Then would he limit it to himself? Or would he make

it a mass affair? No, he spoke often against such a proposal for reasons both subjective and objective. The only alternative left would be to limit it to the members and ex-members of the Working Committee, to the members of the Assemblies, Councils and Council of State, The All India Congress Committee and the Provincial Committees. That alone would be a goodly number—sufficient for and significant of the moral objective that Gandhi has in mind. Is India behind the British in this War? They claim that she is, though they secretly feel doubts about it. India's own answer was given in Bombay on the 15th September, 1940. As the days of September were approaching, there was a feeling expressed, may be, as the result of wishful thinking,—in Lucknow and Allahabad, in Nagpur and Gauhati that a last interview between the Viceroy and Gandhi might yet save the situation. It was our singular good fortune that the darker days of the Congress had given place to brighter days and that Gandhi's leadership was once again available to the Nation in the supreme moment of her trials and tribulations.

The worst however has happened. Our anticipations and apprehensions have only proved too true. The bone of contention between the British Government and India was that India should not have been plunged into war without her knowledge or consent. Apart from, non-violence which abhors all war, there is this issue which lies at the root of the Congress resolution in Bombay and of Gandhi's demand of the Viceroy. Gandhiji refers in so many words to this aspect of the matter which emphasises the involuntary involvement of India in war. His contention is unchallengeable that so long as Britain

has plunged India into war without her consent or knowledge, so long Britain cannot reasonably put forward the argument that India's contribution to war, whether in men or money, is of a voluntary nature. Contributions could be voluntary only when a country is not obliged to make those contributions. It is this right of free choice,—whether we shall or shall not make contributions on a voluntary basis, that Gandhi has demanded. Such a demand has been denied by the Viceroy.

The resolution passed in Bombay by the A.I.C.C. on September, 1940, runs as follows :—

> The All India Congress Committee has given its careful attention to the events that have taken place since its last meeting held in Poona on July 27, 1940, and to the resolutions passed by the Working Committee at Wardha in August last. The Committee approves of and endorses these resolutions. In order to end the deadlock in India and to promote the national cause, in co-operation with the British people, the Working Committee, even at the sacrifice of Mahatma Gandhi's co-operation, made a proposal to the British Government in their Delhi resolution of July 7, which was subsequently approved by the A. I. C. C. at Poona. This proposal was rejected by the British Government in a manner which left no doubt that they had no intention to recognise India's independence, and would, if they could, continue to hold this country indefinitely in bondage for British exploitation. This decision of the British Government shows that they will impose their will upon India, and their recent policy has further shown that they will not even tolerate free expression of public opinion in condemnation of their associating India in the war against Germany, against the will of a vast body of the people of India, and of exploiting her national resources and man-power for this purpose. The A. I. C. C. cannot submit to a policy which is a denial of India's natural right to freedom, which suppresses the free expression of public opinion and which would lead to

the degradation of her people and their continued enslavement. By following this policy the British Government have created an intolerable situation, and are imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of the honour and the elementary rights of the people. The Congress is pledged under Gandhiji's leadership to non-violence for the vindication of India's freedom. At this grave crisis in the movement for national freedom, the All India Congress Committee, therefore, requests him to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken. The Delhi resolution, confirmed by the A. I. C. C. at Poona, which prevented him from so doing, no longer applies. It has lapsed.

The A. I. C. C. sympathise with the British people as well as the people of all other countries involved in the War. Congressmen cannot withhold their admiration for the bravery and endurance shown by the British nation in the face of danger and peril. They can have no ill-will against them, and the spirit of Satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them. But this self-imposed restraint cannot be taken to the extent of self-extinction. The Congress must insist on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy, based on non-violence. The Congress has, however, no desire at the present moment to extend non-violent resistance, should this become necessary, beyond what is required for the preservation of the liberties of the people.

In view of certain misapprehensions that have arisen in regard to the Congress policy of non-violence, the A. I. C. C. desire to state this afresh, and to make it clear that this policy continues, notwithstanding anything contained in previous resolutions which may have led to these mis-apprehensions. This Committee firmly believes in the policy and practice of non-violence not only in the struggle for Swaraj, but also, in so far as this may be possible of application, in free India. The Committee is convinced, and recent world events have demonstrated, that complete world disarmament is necessary, and the establishment of a new and juster political and economic order, if the world is not to destroy itself and revert to barbarism. A free India will therefore throw all her weight in favour of world disarmament and should herself

be prepared to give a lead in this to the world. Such lead will inevitably depend on external factors and internal conditions, but the State would do its utmost to give effect to this policy of disarmament. Effective disarmament and the establishment of world peace by the ending of national wars, depend ultimately on the removal of the causes of wars and national conflicts. These causes must be rooted out by the ending of the domination of one country over another and the exploitation of one people or group by another. To that end India will peacefully labour, and it is with this objective in view that the people of India desire to attain the status of a free and independent nation. Such freedom will be the prelude to the close association with other countries within a comity of free nations for the peace and progress of the world.

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Every tree has its roots and of them there is one which we call the "mother root". You may cut any number of roots, that does not kill the tree, but cut the "mother root" and the tree dies. This mother root in respect of the tree of Indian Nationalism, of India's Swaraj is Civil Liberty. When we are forbidden the right of free speech, be it in time of war, be it on the subject of participation in war, the mother root is virtually cut and the tree of nationalism, of independence withers. It is only by reviving that mother root that we can restore life and vitality in a Nation. This is what the A.I.C.C. decision of Bombay sets forth. Give the people the freedom to speak out whether they shall or shall not take part in war preparations and they will become a live nation, else they are a morbid nation whose activities are not its own. If India regains this fundamental right, this root-power she will, like Ireland, be competent to say 'yea' or no to the call for war effort and too, will, like Ireland, be an ally of England.

Gandhi for Moral Victory

Gandhi always seeks out a moral issue and aims at a moral victory. He did so on the Jalianwalabag issue not by asking for General Dyer's head on a charger nor by pressing for compensation for the injured or the bereaved, but by demanding an apology from the Government of India—which the Duke of Connaught all but gave, but gave without grace or glory. Then again during the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations, Gandhi refrained from insisting on an enquiry into at least select cases of Police excesses, because Lord Irwin did not want to be "humiliated" by such an enquiry. It is the moral issue that appeals to Gandhi and it is a moral issue that he would discuss with the Viceroy and if need be, that he will ask the country to fight on. Victory on such an issue implies and includes victory on the main issue of Swaraj, because the issue involved is a big one. "To be or not to be," that is the issue before India and that is the issue raised by Gandhi on behalf of India before the Viceroy in contemplating this last campaign of Satyagraha.

His Majesty King George VI has offered the observation in his speech before Parliament that this war is a war of ideals. So too we had thought. In respect of the wars of old, when Dharma Raja sent round his war horse and challenged the *Samrats* of India, the king was only claiming the acknowledgment by them of their allegiance to him. There was no lust of gold or territory. Later when Asoka marched his armies to Kalinga, he was content with erecting a pillar on which were inscribed his fourteen edicts. Such pillars are to be met with today in Delhi between the old and the new cities and in

Orissa. In the State of Junagadh (Kathiawar), the fourteen edicts are inscribed on a rocky dome not more than ten feet high from the road which had been exposed to wind and weather, but over which a building was erected by Lord Curzon. The Asokan wars were wars of culture. Later came the wars of greed. Finally with the invention of the steam engine and the spread of power industries, the wars became wars of trade and commerce and not of territory. It was Lord Rosebery that proclaimed that "The wars of the future would be wars of Commerce."

It is refreshing now to be told after the lapse of fourteen months of the world war that the war of today is a war of ideals. Well, may we call it so—a war between Fascism and Democracy. But we have a right in that case to ask the innocent question—where is democracy? Is it in England? To disprove the claim we call to witness Mr. Joseph Kennedy, ex-American ambassador in England, who recently stated that Democracy in England was finished. Then shall we say—is it in India? It is for His Majesty's ministers to prove it. May we respectfully state that the Great European War (1914-18) too was considered, proclaimed and pursued by President Wilson as a war of ideals. But its result is the world war of today. A war of ideals ends all wars. The treaties that conclude it do not form groups, do not harbour resentment, do not avow vendetta, and do not wreak vengeance. They do not impose reparations or demand repayment of debts. A War of ideals does not annex territory or create zones of interest or influence; it does not intrigue with nations big and small, incite feelings of hatred, or hatch conspiracies for the future. Above all, a war of ideals

removes the beam in one's own eye before it seeks to remove the mote in the neighbour's or opponent's. A war of ideals makes no distinction between the East and the West, between coloured nations and colourless ones. It does not spring from the psychology of "*divide and rule*" nor prosper under the strategy of "*rule and divide*".

War-Machines vs. Resources

Mr. Amery says that this is a war of machines, while Mr. Smuts is of opinion that this is a war of resources and His Majesty the King of Britain says that this is a war of ideals. To King George VI, the issue is a moral one. To the Secretary of State for India, it is intellectual, to the South African Premier, it is physical. The machines of Amery's are monsters that shed blood and consume it by oceans. The resources of Smuts imply strategy on either side over-reaching the other's. Though these three may appear to be on three different planes, there must be a unity underlying them, for the war is going on from day to day, from month to month and from year to year. Can it be that it is intended that moral ideals should be inforced by physical weapons wielded with intellectual acumen? If so the ideals cease to be moral. An ideal is a concept of establishing good in place of evil. A machine is an instrument that overcomes evil with evil or good with evil. The mind and intellect are the bridges that connect the ideals of the spirit with the instrument that is material. If the ideal is a pure ideal, exalted and exalting, then it must achieve its desired results—not by descending to the planes of the

evil it sets out to conquer, but by raising that evil to its own level. In other words, those ideals are moral and uplifting which seek fulfilment through means equally uplifting. Satyagraha then is the only remedy—not wars of blood-shed and violence. In spite of these obvious principles Britain has embroiled herself with affairs in Europe, and in doing so, embroiled India with them. India has protested and organized a Satyagraha Campaign in 1940.

That the course of true Satyagraha never runs smooth nor runs uniformly in a country, throughout a period of, say two decades, is a fact yet to be recognised by those very votaries of this new cult who have made some of the heaviest sacrifices in the cause of national uplift. While one criticism of Satyagraha is to the effect that once people are accustomed to disobedience,—mass or individual, as a remedial measure against national grievances under the stress of foreign rule,—all law and order are apt to be imperilled, there is also the other criticism, not perhaps equally wide-spread but none the less equally noteworthy, which emanates from the leaders of Satyagraha (not as in the former case from Non-Satyagrahis) to the effect that once people are used to Satyagraha, they are apt to look forward piously and prayerfully to it as the one panacea for all the ailments of the body politic. We have had illustrations in the history of Indian emancipation of both the criticisms but those who understand the essential principle of Satyagraha will not make the mistake of giving any value or weight to the former of these two. As soon as the Congress ministries had been formed, various movements were inaugurated which savoured of Satyagraha but which were conceived in passion,

hatred, in disobedience and were devoid of all civility. They were counterfeits of the great movement. If the Khaksars thought it necessary to disobey order their excesses could not be put down to any sense of laxity or lenience which might have been fostered under the auspices of Satyagraha. They were armed with weapons of violence and made no secret of their readiness to use them even unprovokedly. The communistic troubles which have emerged from labour organisations at different places in the country are another instance of the cavil and misrepresentation to which Satyagraha is apt to be exposed at the hands of people who are ill-trained all ill-fitted for the participation in this new system of warfare. If the very fundamentals of Communism forswear all non-violence, the passionate and provocative conduct of members of that organisation cannot be put down as a side result of the Satyagrahic movement. As a matter of fact, it is the opposite way. Communism is the result of the rejection of the principles of truth and non-violence that underlie the cult and philosophy of Satyagraha. If there is a movement called Civil Disobedience Movement started under the single leadership of Gandhi and if at the same time, there are movements which are avowedly hostile to it and are run under the leadership of various organisations or individuals who challenge the principles of truth and non-violence as factors (*in*) applicable to a political struggle face to face with a foreign government, he would be a bold man indeed who would hazard the view that these were the off-shoots of Satyagraha. But to us the far more important factor to reckon with, is not the misuse or abuse of Satyagraha but the overuse of it by people who

are sincere followers of the new philosophy with its rigid adherence to the principles of truth and non-violence. These are over-zealous enthusiasts who have in them abundance of sentiment and emotion which are, however, unrestrained by judgment and uncontrolled by a due sense of correlation and co-ordination. A deliberate attempt has been made during the first year of the war to stampede the Congress into a Satyagrahic movement by precipitating the preaching of non-participation in and resistance to war effort. It has caused the Congress enormous trouble to restrain and subdue the enthusiasm of the young men and to persuade them to hold their bubbling emotions in reserve for the day when the better judgment of the Congress should feel that time came for the inauguration of the campaign of Satyagraha. It has been repeatedly explained how Gandhi's principles are strongly opposed to the policy of taking advantage of the enemy's distress. At the risk of repeating, we cite below certain instances of the observance of this rule by him.

During the Zulu rebellion, as has been pointed out already, Gandhi stopped his campaign and assisted the enemy by organising an ambulance Corps. During the Great War of 1914-18, he had expressed the wish that if he had the power, he would withdraw all Home Rule agitation and help in the war effort; and times without number has he expressed the view in the course of the year 1940, when effort was being made to force him into Civil Disobedience that the Congress would not feel justified in precipitating such a step during a national crisis of unprecedented character which Britain was facing.

Satyagraha and the World-War (1940)

' Gandhi's demand is that the Indian National Congress and other members of the public should be in a position to give full expression to their views in relation to India participating in war and war effort provided only that such expression is fully non-violent. Lord Linlithgow is unable to go beyond the present position in England in respect of conscientious objectors, which seems to be that they are absolved from the duty of fighting and are even allowed to profess the faith in public but are not permitted to carry their opposition to the length of persuading the war workers to follow their precepts. Gandhi, however, wants to go further than the Viceroy, considering the peculiar conditions of India. He is of the opinion that the Indian objector—either to all war as such or to the participation of India in the present war—should be untrammeled in the expression of his views. Gandhi's central point is not that we should picket the war workers or preach to them in any way against the work they are engaged in, but that it should be open to every congress-man and non-congress-man alike to speak and persuade people throughout the country to refrain from assisting India's war effort in any way which would involve India's participation in blood-shed. It is not as if some people have merely conscientious objections to helping war but that they have objections, doubtless conscientious as well as intellectual, to any participation in a war to which they are not invited, a war too,—which is imposed upon them and one which they regard as a war for saving imperialism of which India is the greatest victim. The Viceroy takes advantage of the two statements which have been made by Gandhi and the

Congress,—one of which is that the Congress is as much opposed to the victory of Nazism as any Britisher can be, and the other that the Congress is anxious not to embarrass the British at this critical juncture in their national history. The Viceroy wanted to turn both these statements against Gandhi and said that if they did not wish victory to Nazis, they should help the Britishers to win the war. To say that the Congress or the Indians do not wish victory to the Nazis, could not be carried according to Gandhi to the extent of India participating in Britiain's war. The second point, namely that Congress should not wish to embarrass the British in their present crisis, was being taken literally by the Viceroy to so great an extent as to make non-embarrassment, imply self-extinction for the Congress. Gandhi was not prepared to agree to it. On the other hand, he expressed the last hope that it might be possible for the Government to work out their policy in the spirit of the Congress position. But at the same time, he did not conceal the fact that Congress should not be molested in the act of proclaiming its faith.

The pacifist in England as has already been pointed out is a strange individual. The conscientious objector finds in war time a favourable opportunity for propaganda. That, indeed, is the psychological time for making an abiding impression, upon vast numbers of people. But in India the Congress is not merely a body of conscientious objectors. It resents a war that is imposed upon the nation and therefore is regarded as galling to its self-respect. Apparently, we must pay the price—not merely for being citizens of a State, but for holding our own opinions in the State and trying to push forward our ideas of social reform and national reconstruction,—in a word for seeking out

a better State. The Congress then had no other course than to go into the wilderness once again in the firm faith as Richard B. Gregg puts it, that :

> "Persecution strengthens and purifies the energies and thoughts and inner attitude" (not only) "of the conscientious objectors themselves" but all those who possess a high sense of national self-respect and visualise a new order of society based upon truth and non-violence.

The Latest Satyagraha Campaign (1940)

Once again Gandhi has started a campaign in India in 1940. He has connected it with the demand of the Indians for freedom of choice in the war now on. The world's bankruptcy of statesmanship and strategy based upon violence is only too evident to-day. Every treaty bears the seeds of a future war. The best guarantee against wars and mutual slaughter is good will. The whole of Europe professes the Christian faith, despite the numerous denominations under which it is professed. Yet the Sermon on the Mount is honoured only in its breach by both sides who invoke the same 'God, the Father,' and the same 'God, the Son' and the same 'God, the Holy Ghost,' for success for big battalions. If Jesus came to Berlin or for that matter to London, what would the Christ in him say? Gandhi has not drawn the long bow in asking for a State in India without army.

Satyagraha is not without its army, its strategy, its tactics. We need a peace army working for the realization of the ends of truth, through the adoption of the means of Ahimsa. Ahimsa as has been repeatedly pointed out is not a negative factor, but a positive force, a potent instrument for the spread of unity, for the pro-

pagation of love, for the triumph of soul force over brute force. Satyagraha enlists not the able-bodied, but the high souled in its peace army. Satyagraha does not thirst for blood of the opponent but slakes the thirst of the opponent by shedding one's own blood. It stirs up the element of surprise in him by shaking his faith in the accepted, mundane standards of life, and liberates in him a volume of creative energy. Satyagraha is not cowardice but courage. It is not idleness but activity begotten of wide sympathies. Satyagraha is not the preserve of a cultured few but is the heritage of the unnumbered millions. It is not a new invention but the rediscovery of an old philosophy worked out into a new art and science in its application to what is glibly called 'politics.'

How the Chariot Moves

When Gandhi started the non-co-operation movement in 1920, he stood alone. The cauldron of Indian nationalism was resting ill balanced upon but one point of the hearth over the fires of which, its contents were seething. To send therefore a solitary Satyagrahi to prison in 1940, is not a novel experience. As the hearth fires continue to blaze forth, the supports of the cauldron grow in number and it becomes stable and strong in its location. Pandit Motilal Nehru was the first to join in 1920, Lala Lajpatrai came half-heartedly but 'whole bodily' into the movement next. Then came Desabandhu, C. R. Das, like a mighty avalanche joining its life giving waters to the limpid rapids of the stream of non-co-operation in the Punjab and the U.P., and swelling and deepening its river bed in the plains of Bengal. The monsoon is to set in once again. No monsoon can

break without being immediately preceded by the fierce heat of the summer. The chariot of the sun has to execute his rounds day in and day out. Just as the solar chariot has but one wheel, drawn by seven horses, with seven serpents serving as the reins, and is driven without support in the space between the earth and the sky, and that by a charioteer who has no legs, even so the chariot of the sun of Gandhi is executing its rounds in the spaces of Hindustan, being driven by an unknown charioteer with the aid of the seven serpent reins of *Dama*, *Yama*, *Dharma*, *Dana*, *Soucha*, *Satya*, and *Kshama*. The hot winds have thus once again commenced. They have their mission. They blow over every part of India before the rains set in. The monsoon will break ere long. Heat will be absorbed and the clouds in the high heavens will after condensation yield their life-giving, fertilizing flood flowing from hill and dale through glen and forest and helping to manure field and farm and there raise crops that sustain the world. And all this *Kriyasiddhi* or realization of objects is achieved by the "*Mahatam Nopakarane*,"—the great men without any instruments. If the sun's chariot, handicapped by having but one wheel, seven serpents for rein and a driver without legs, can move every day from the East to the West, why should we doubt the capacity of Gandhi to drive the chariot of Hindustan from West to East once for all, with the aid of a driver of flawless character?

What shall we do now individually. Remember that while the warrior aims at Victory in war, he is kept in the field only by a commissariat which feeds and clothes and supplies the munitions of the fighting line. Even so, we must engage ourselves in a programme of feeding and clothing and preparing our instruments

of fight, namely the spinning charkha, the pounding rod, the grinding stone, the boiling pan, the weaving loom, and the pressing ghani. Then let us forget caste and race and remember that we are a Nation; let us obliterate untouchability and abolish drink. Let us above all, entertain no hostility towards the Britisher in spite of his many drawbacks, for in the last analysis, he is our guest who may have even abused our hospitality, but for whose protection in India, we as the hosts must hold ourselves responsible.

In every war, we have the aims of war. The *aims of war* as Wickham Steed puts it, are to win victory. The *war aims*, however, are different. They are the principles on which peace is to be reconstructed. The former is an incentive to war, the latter determines its conclusion. In India, the one is Satyagraha, the other is the constructive programme. The warriors are the few, the reconstructors are the many. That is why Gandhi has strictly limited Satyagraha first to individual as opposed to mass action, and then even at that to two persons. But he wants the millions to prepare for peace, to spin and to weave, to pound rice and grind flour, to press oil and boil jaggery and manufacture paper in a word.

Hand-made rice and flour give employment to two crores of people, hand-made yarn and cloth, to 12 crores. General unemployment is cured only by cottage industries. English rule may cease, but the rule of Lancashire and Manchester, of Liverpool and Nottingham cannot last. Independent India should be self-contained, self-reliant and self-respecting. The constructive programme is the clothing of the *spirit* that is liberated from its bondage by Gandhian Satyagraha. It is the complement and concomitant of Satyagraha. Let

India, therefore, watch and pray, infuse her spirit into Gandhi and press on with its constructive programme and promote through its unity, love and service.

Gandhi—the man of polar opposites

Gandhi exposes himself to charges of polar opposition. At one time he is accused of involving people in cataclysmal disturbances. At another he is ridiculed for the toy fight that he puts up against a mighty government. To meet the reactionary measures in Hyderabad he sends an army of four. To confront the British power in India, he is content with one. Satyagraha does not depend upon the strategy of victory going to the last shilling in the exchequer and the last soldier in the barracks. One individual who is pure-hearted, high-souled, unselfish, who is purged of all personal ambition, divested of all desire and free from all fear, is able to give fight single-handed to the mightiest of monarchs. Gandhi has told the Viceroy so through the columns of his weekly. He has asserted it so far three times. He never hides his plans. Only it requires watchfulness to notice his stray sentences and understand their significance. In like manner he had told Sir Samuel Hoare that he would fight the dismemberment of the Harijans from the Hindus, with his very life. He had said this at the Second Round Table Conference in 1931. He repeated it at the open meeting on the Azad Maidan on his return from London. He gave notice in identical terms to the Secretary of State from his place in the prison in March 1932. He entered upon his fast to death accordingly in September that year. There is nothing new about his plans. His is the same old strategy of non-violence and the same

old tactics of Truth.

There is an element nevertheless of surprise in what Gandhi has done. Who is this Vinoba Bhave? Asks a puzzled world in utter bewilderment. To Gandhi, a man that has buried himself in his Ashram and is working away with this Charkha, is many times more trustworthy than the hero of a hundred platforms. He is a comrade and "companion in arms" to whom he would assign the first place, in one sense, the place of honour in the national struggle. If he should die in asserting the nation's right of freedom of speech, his would be the purest sacrifice. That is the standard by which Gandhi would judge his fellow workers, his soldiers, his warriors. Nor is this the first occasion on which doubts and difficulties are expressed over Gandhi's programme. When he planned an experiment in mass Satyagraha through non-payment of taxes in the Anand and Bardoli Talukas under his direct supervision, there was a loud complaint why Guzerat should be the first and not Guntur. When he decreed that no one should touch salt until he reached Dandi and made some himself impatience overtook the volunteer organizations all over the country and it was a job for district and provincial leaders to keep the volunteers in their rendezvous and camps. In like manner people ask what purpose will the arrest of one person serve at this juncture and how do we look in the eyes of the nations that are engaged in their holocausts on a colossal scale?

Who is Vinoba?

People ask too what should happen if Vinoba were not arrested? Vinoba is not a dummy or a booby.

He is a native of Baroda and had given up his studies in 1916, while in the Intermediate classes and repaired to the Himalayas for tapas. On return he came into contact with Gandhi and ever since both have acted and reacted upon each other. He is the best known amongst three brothers of whom he is the oldest and who have all equally good record to their credit. Vinoba has translated the Gita into Maharashtra and brought out all its sublimity and music in his mother tongue. In enhancing the spinning wage not a little credit and responsibility was due to Vinoba for the actual experiments made on the strength of which the increment was considered feasible. Vinoba is as much a politician as X, Y or Z. He had been in jail like any others and it is not as if a spinner unknown to the political world has been dug out of the bales of cotton in the Pounar Ashram and is now put forth as the show-boy of Gandhian Satyagraha. If Vinoba is not arrested, he will go on with his propaganda and thousands will flock to his meetings to know who this 'new animal' is, how this "unknown warrior" speaks, acts and fights. If he is arrested, he clears the way for the second in succession. Who the second is would shortly be known. Every time, the Satyagrah campaign is inaugurated or renewed, it assumes a new shape though under the old strategy. Tyroes in Satyagraha begin where they last ended. The expert begins afresh and anew. It is for the State to react, and its reaction would determine our later moves. After all Satyagraha is as much a piece of war as the battle of Britain, but it is singularly bereft of all bloodshed, anger and vengeance and therefore uplifts in character the parties that meet in combat. When the plan of Civil Disobedience was mooted, when sea-water was boiled in broken pans of pottery, when

men marched to deposits of salt to pick it up, when drink shops were approached for picketing by women, when dates and palm trees were cut, when foreign cloth was burnt, when the rickety charkha was sought to be renovated, it all looked like the antics of a megalomaniac, the promises of an alchemist, the prophecies of a gypsy, the forebodings of an astrologer, palmist or physiognomist, the feats of a legerdemain trickster. We have tried and tested Satyagraha for twenty years. We are on the last experiment. Let us add a little faith to our reason and we shall not take long to discover that a new philosophy has come to stay and a new science and art are being developed to save mankind from the orgy of violence and vendetta which cannot *make* life but only *mars* it. Satyagraha is full of surprises and surprise is an emotion which is fruitful of vast creative energy.

At last, in the midst of doubt and despair amongst a few hope and faith in the breasts of the many, individual civil disobedience had begun in the person of Vinoba Bhave, a Satyagrahi of 32 years standing, a scholar of wide learning, an ascetic of stern discipline, a devotee of Khadder and village industries and the foremost amongst the disciples of Gandhi. In simple yet effective language, in measured and unfaltering tones, Vinoba has delivered his four speeches against participation in war effort, disclaiming at the same time that the Congress ever intended picketing against recruits or contributions. The Law has taken its course and the accused has been sentenced to three months' imprisonment. Government has met gentleness of attack with a gentle counter-attack. The trial was held as unostentatiously as the 'offence' was committed. Deliberation, balance and forethought are visible on both sides. Would the same attributes present

themselves throughout?

The next Satyagrahi, however, is a dynamic personality to whom gentleness is unknown and humility anathema. His meetings are likely to be stupendous, his tirades, fulminating. They say *like* meets with *like* and we were left to ponder over the question, indeed left to wonder whether the treatment meted out to Jawaharlal would be in the same spirit and measure as that meted out to Vinoba. It was not so, of course not. To the Satyagrahi, however, the length of imprisonment or its severity is but a secondary matter. What counts with him is the sincerity of purpose, the firmness of tone and the determination of spirit displayed in working out the campaign of Satyagraha. When Vinoba's name was mentioned, they called him the unknown warrior. To-day his name is familiar to millions of his contemporaries in India and to-morrow his name will be revered by posterity as that of the chosen disciple of Mahatma Gandhi for the purest sacrifice at the altar of the motherland.

Satyagraha is a Yajna and just as you select the Yajna Pasuvu,—a goat of spotless black, even so the Yajna Pasuvu is a person of spotless white in character. The way has been led; there is no hurry about sallies and counter-sallies. Success does not depend upon as to who gives the first shot or who is the first to cross the frontier. Satyagraha is a Dharma Yuddha in which the generals have met beforehand and let each other know what either would do. On our side we have given to the opponent the further advantage of letting him know our strength as well as our weakness even as Bheeshma let Arjuna know his own secrets. We do not conceal aught in our fight. Our strategy is open, our demands are simple. Why should not Britain

range on her side the greatest man of the world, undoubtedly, the purest soul on earth to-day? For, the strength that purity gives would for ever remain unconquerable.

This Satyagraha is undoubtedly one of its own type. It has the largest outlook doubtless and has made the smallest beginning. Yet Mahatma hopes it will have the best of results. How does he hope for such large fruit from such a small seed? Have we not framed and formulated an absurd question? All seed is small, all fruit is abundant. Only the seed must sprout and blossom and bear fruit. Then the fruit will be ample. The seed must be watered, the soil must be aerated, the plant must be manured. It is for this purpose that Gandhiji wants the constructive Programme to be taken to by the whole nation with a real zeal and with unabating earnestness. The seed that falls on the rocky soil does not sprout. The seed that is not watered decays. The seed that is not manured is stunted. But when all these processes of gardening are well observed, then we shall have the success of our labours and the fulfilment of our hopes.

> Or again let us go the analogy of Motor Traffic:—Before 1896 the speed of a motor vehicle travelling on British Roads was limited to 4 miles per hour. The law prevailing then required every car to be preceded by a man on foot carrying a red flag. All that is gone. Now Motors move at breakneck speed. But the greater the speed, the less the resistance overcome. The greater the resistance, the less the speed. If the driving wheels revolve but once for every 12 revolves of the crank rod, the car will move at 1/6 the speed attained if they executed one revolve for every two revolves of the crank shaft, but it will have six times the ability to overcome the resistance presented by a hill or sandy road. If the driven gear has twice the number of teeth of the driving gear, it will revolve at 1/2 the speed but with twice the force.

The gear driven by the engine is in mesh with a gear that has many more teeth and revolves much slower in consequence of a gear that has possibly one and a half times the number of teeth or a gear that has the same number of teeth and revolves at the same speed.

The campaign of Satyagraha that has been inaugurated by Gandhi is altogether unprecedented in character. It is the hope of Gandhi that he will be able to solve not only the Indian problem but the international problem as well. It is hoped that conditions will work their way up to such a consummation when it will be possible for Gandhi to represent not only India's case at the Peace Conference but participate in the peace negotiations between the belligerents when the time comes for it. There was a striking sentence in his letter "To Every Briton" in which he offered his services to the British people in their combat on the non-violent basis against the invading hoards of the German nation if they were allowed to land in Britain unresisted. Strangely enough this large offer put forward by Gandhi was anticipated by the Rev. Jack C. Winslow (p. 313).[1]

Rules of Satyagraha of 1930

To complete the study of the disciplines of Satya-

[1] This has already been quoted on page 113, but for ready reference we quote it again:—Mr. Winslow said, "I have found myself much wondering, of late, whether even now, at an age when he is entitled to lay down his armour and prepare in a Sannyasi's quiet for his final release, Mahatma Gandhi may not have one closing task, crowning his whole life's work, yet to perform to take leadership, here in the West, of those unled millions in all the nations of Europe, who long for a righteous and lasting settlement and peace won without strife or hatred, and show us what we must do and what we must suffer that such peace may be achieved."

graha, it would be just as well to add here in below some rules relating to it framed by Gandhi on the eve of the Great Salt Campaign of 1930, as well as those prescribed in 1940.

> Satyagraha literally means insistence on truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is connoted by the word Satyagraha. Satyagraha, to be genuine, may be offered against parents, against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow citizens, even against the whole world.
>
> Such a universal force necessarily makes no distinction between kinsmen and strangers, young and old, man and woman, friend and foe. The force to be so applied can never be physical. There is in it no room for violence. The only force of universal application can, therefore, be that of *ahimsa* or love. In other words, it is soul force.
>
> Love does not burn others, it burns itself. Therefore, a Satyagrahi, i.e., a civil resister will joyfully suffer even unto death.
>
> It follows, therefore, that a civil resister, whilst he will strain every nerve to compass the end of the existing rule, will do no intentional injury in thought, word or deed to the person of a single Englishman. This necessarily brief explanation of Satyagraha will perhaps enable the reader to understand and appreciate the following rules:

A. As an Individual

1. A Satyagrahi i.e., a civil resister will harbour no anger.
2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.
3. In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but he will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger.
4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment of removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by authorities.

5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.

6. Non-retaliation excludes swearing and cursing.

7. Therefore a civil resister will never insult his opponent, and therefore also not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of *ahimsa*.

8. A civil resister will not salute the Union Jack, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian.

9. In the course of the struggle if any one insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or assault at the risk of his own life.

10. Every Satyagrahi or civil resister, will behave with due decorum towards prison officials and will observe all such discipline of the prison as is not contrary to self-respect. Whilst he will salute officials in due prison discipline, he will not perform any humiliating task and refuse to cry victory to Sarkar. He will take all food which is pure and cleanly served and which is not contrary to his religion and will refuse to take any food that is served in unclean vessels.

11. He will not ask for any convenience which is not necessary for keeping his body in a fitting condition. He is entitled to ask for such conveniences as are required for his physical or spiritual well-being.

12. A civil resister will not fast for want of conveniences whose deprivation does not involve any injury to one's self-respect.

B. As a Unit

13. A civil resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not.

14. He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical or foolish, and then appeal to higher authority. He is free before

joining to determine the fitness of the corps to satisfy him, but after he has joined it, it becomes a duty to submit to its discipline irksome or otherwise. If the sum total of the energy of the corps appears to a member to be improper or immoral, he has a right to sever his connection, but being within it, he has no right to commit a breach of its discipline.

15. No civil resister is to expect maintenance for his dependents. It would be an accident if any such provision is made. A civil resister entrusts his dependents to the care of God. Even in ordinary warfare wherein hundreds of thousands give themselves up to it, they are able to make no previous provision. How much more, then, should such be the case in Satyagraha? It is the universal experience that in such times hardly anybody is left to starve.

C. In Communal Fights

16. No civil resister will intentionally become cause of communal quarrels.

17. In the event of any such outbreak, he will not take sides, but he will assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right. Being a Hindu he will be generous towards Mussalmans and others, and will sacrifice himself in the attempt to save Non-Hindus from a Hindu attack. And if the attack is from the other side, he will not participate in any retaliation but will give his life in protecting Hindus.

18. He will, to the best of his ability, avoid every occasion that may give rise to communal quarrels.

19. If there is a procession of Satyagrahis they will do nothing that would wound the religious susceptibilities of any community, and they will not take part in any other processions that are likely to wound such susceptibilities.

Reference may appropriately be made here to two documents which have sprung up in connection with the latest Satyagraha. One is the pledge that is to be signed by the Satyagrahi himself and the second is the

body of instructions issued by Gandhi in respect of such Satyagraha.

THE SATYAGRAHA PLEDGE

1. The Pledge runs as follows :—

I desire to enroll myself as an active Satyagrahi.

I solemnly declare that,

(1) So long as I remain an active Satyagrahi I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent, since I believe that as India is circumstanced today, non-violence alone can help and result in the attainment of Purna Swaraj and consolidation of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsi, Christian or Jew.

(2) I believe and shall endeavour always to promote such unity.

(3) I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall on all possible occasions seek personal contact with, and endeavour to render service to, the submerged classes.

(4) I believe in Swadeshi as essential for India's economic, political and moral salvation and shall use hand spun and hand woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth. I shall so far as possible use the produce of hand and village industries.

(5) I shall spin regularly.

(6) I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all rules and regulations not inconsistent with the spirit of this pledge prescribed by any superior Congress organisation or the Working Committee or any other agency established by the Congress.

(7) I am prepared to suffer imprisonment or even death for the sake of the cause and my country without resentment.

(8) In the event of my imprisonment I shall not claim from the Congress any support for myself, my family and dependents.

II. The instructions that have been issued by Mahatma Gandhi are as follows :—

(*a*) No one will offer Civil Disobedience without first informing the District Magistrate of his district of the time when and the place where and the manner in which it is to be offered.

(*b*) It is advisable not to hold public meetings for the purpose in cities. Meetings may be held in villages. The best and the easiest way is to repeat the following slogan to passers by as the resister walks on in a particular direction until he is arrested. My preference is for this last method. It is harmless, economical and effective. No argument is necessary. It rivets attention on the single issue of war. The idea is to prevent the movement from lapsing into mass Civil Disobedience. This is the slogan. "It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance." The slogan should be translated into the language of the Province in which Civil Disobedience is to be offered.

(*c*) Civil Disobedience is to be offered singly. It need not be simultaneous. The whole of this programme should, if possible, be finished in one month.

(*d*) All demonstrations should be avoided when Civil Disobedience is offered.

(*e*) The ordinary channels of publicity being closed, we must rely upon everybody becoming his own newspaper. Satyagraha is and must be independent of the ordinary channels. We must not feel helpless when these are closed, and they are for the most part even now closed against us. It should be realised too that the repetition of the slogan while walking in one direction reduces the movement to its simplest terms.

(*f*) Secrecy should be avoided. Therefore cyclostyles and the like should be used only when the owners are prepared to lose them. The cheapest multiplying method is to use composition trays. The formula for making them may be got locally. (The A. I. C. C. office shall try to send it later).

(*g*) Congress funds need not be kept secretly. If the Go-

vernment choose to confiscate them, they may do so. In this life and death struggle we must be prepared to lose all funds and other property. We must learn to depend upon the nation financing the movement from day to day. Our wants must therefore be reduced to the minimum. No one need monetary assistance from the Congress.

(*h*) Our policy should be to avoid classification of prisoners. In no case should any attempt be made to ask either for a higher or a lower class. An 'A' class prisoner is not bound to take advantage of the special facilities offered to him. Nor need he be ashamed of availing himself of them if thereby he retains his health.

(*i*) Jail rules and discipline should be strictly observed so long as they are not inconsistent with human dignity. No labour should be avoided because it is labour. One should know its dignity.

(*j*) *Hartals* should be rare. They lose their force if resorted to too often. They are likely to be prohibited. It is better to anticipate the prohibition. Our Civil Resistance is strictly limited. It is not general.

(*k*) Should the Congress be declared an illegal organisation, it should make no difference. I shall conduct the movement so long as I am left free. In the event of my being arrested, it will become self acting if the people have imbibed non-violence. Congressmen should remain calm and unperturbed. Each one will act on his or her own initiative. If he or she feels like offering Civil Disobedience the way is clear. If he or she is unable, they will devote themselves wholly to one or more items of the thirteen-fold constructive programme. I do not propose to appoint a successor. Whether I am in or out those who belong to the Congress constructive organisations may not offer Civil Disobedience.

(*l*) While the Congress functions as legal organisation, the Provincial Congress Committees will elect their President if the present one is arrested. The person elected should seek confirmation from me. I shall be unable to work through him if he does not fulfil my conditions.

(*m*) Congressmen should make it clear in their speech and their action that they are neither pro-fascism nor pro-

Nazism but that they are opposed either to all war or at least to the war conducted on behalf of British Imperialism. They sympathise with the British in their effort to live but they want also to live themselves as members of a fully free nation. They must not therefore, be expected to help Britain at the cost of their own liberty. They bear ill-will to no nation. They want to play their part in establishing lasting peace in the world.

Gandhi's Instructions to Satyagrahi Prisoners

Some instructions regarding the behaviour of Satyagrahi prisoners have been given by Gandhi in reply to an enquiry in 1940.

Three questions are put :—

1. Why should Satyagrahis of high position agree (due to non-refusal) to accept better treatment when their brother-satyagrahis of perhaps lower position get different treatment? Should they not protest against this differential treatment? Will not self-denial of better treatment compel Government to give equal treatment to all politicals sentenced for the same crime and under the same clause?

2. There are some persons who wear pure Khadi on principle. They bear all hardships to put Khadi clothes on. Though they are political prisoners they are not supplied with Khadi. What should such persons do under such circumstances? What solution can be suggested in cases where people who are at heart not Congressmen made use of the Congres and got into positions in local bodies etc., and are doing things that lower Congress prestige?

Answers

Sevagram, Wardha, 28-11-'40.

1. 'A' class prisoners need only take those privileges which are necessary for their health and well-being. The others

should not grumble in any case.

2. There should be no fasting if Khaddar is not given to prisoner to wear in jail.

3. It is not always possible, to check rogues from coming into a movement.

Scope of Individual Satyagraha

Gandhi's reply to another enquiry.

Calcutta November 24, 1940

Dear Mahatmaji,

The section of Congressmen represented by the Forward Block is interested to be enlightened by you as author of the present satyagraha movement on the following points:—

1. What is the concrete issue on which you have initiated the individual satyagraha movement ?

2. (*a*) Is this movement started only for the liberty of one's 'tongue and pen' as once pronounced by you in September last and in connection with which you had an interview with His Excellency the Viceroy ?

(*b*) Or is the movement definitely aimed at anti-war propaganda only ?

(*c*) Or is it on the issue of complete independence ?

3. Is the movement limited to the members of the Working Committee, All-India Congress Committee, and the Central and Provincial Legislative Assemblies ?

(*a*) If not, who else are entitled to participate in the Movement ?

4. Is it within your scheme to expand the movement at any stage to the masses ?

A favour of an immediate reply will be much esteemed. With respectful greetings,

I remain, Mahatmaji,
Yours sincerely,

Gandhi's Reply

Sevagram, Wardha, C. P., Nov. 28

Dear Friend,

The issue on which individual civil disobedience has been started is undoubtedly free speech and free pen. But at the end of every issue is independent India. The movement was limited in its original conception to two or three persons and then extended to members selected by me belonging to the three groups you mention. And then according to the occasion and the reaction on me after each move, it is capable of infinite expansion. I have called for classified lists of members of the P. C. C., executives and their members similarly of District C. C.'s Firka or Taluq C.C.'s and lastly Village C. C.'s. But whatever the expansion may be, it will never be a mass movement. It will always remain, so far as I can see, individual civil disobedience and be confined to those who believe in and fulfil my conditions.

I think this covers all your questions.

Yours sincerely,

No Satyagraha Demonstration

Gandhi's reply to Civil Resisters

That there should be no public demonstration on the occasion of the offering of Satyagraha and that only the authorities and not the public, should be informed of the impending resistance is the advice Gandhi has given to Rajen Babu as a sequel to the incident following the arrest of Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha, Former Premier of Bihar.

After the campaign had well advanced Gandhi made it clear that only those persons are eligible to offer satyagraha who strictly conform to the following conditions :—

(1) They should be habitual and regular spinners.

(2) They should be habitual khadi wearers.

(3) They should believe in the necessity of communal unity and removal of untouchability in every shape and form.

(4) They should believe in the necessity of supporting village handicrafts and swadeshi in everything.

(5) They should believe that swaraj for the millions is unattainable without non-violence.

(6) They should believe in the Bombay resolution of the All India Congress Committee.

(7) They should believe in an inevitable connection between the above mentioned points and non-violence.

Gandhi has stressed that nobody is obliged to court imprisonment merely as a matter of discipline. Civil Disobedience thus becomes a matter of inviolable faith and not discipline. The Congress does not—at least Gandhi does not—expect anybody to offer Civil Disobedience who does not believe in the urgency of it. Gandhi considers it disgraceful for any Congressman to say that he offers civil resistance for the sake of mere discipline. He has further stressed that no lukewarm adherence to the Congress brings us nearer to our goal nor half-hearted political belief in the Congress programme can answer the purpose.

Those who do constructive work are just as good as civil resisters, and by their faith and devotion to service they are rendering greater service to the cause of civil resistance than civil resisters of doubtful complexion. He has further stressed that we shall reach our goal if civil resistance has the backing of the nation in the shape of conformity to the constructive programme. Quality is the thing which is required in the fight and not the quantity. Of course both combined would be welcomed.

CHAPTER V

SATYAGRAHA—ITS TECHNIQUE

I

One paradoxical statement which Gandhi has repeatedly made is that he is burdened by numbers. He would fain have fewer followers to seek the jail or swell the membership of a Sangham. To him, each individual soul as forming part of the universal soul, is a miniature cosmos in itself. "Each individual man or woman, has a personality as sacred as his own." But he is exacting in his demand of his chosen few. They must be able to "observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth and cultivate fearlessness." He does not neglect the physical in his quest for the spiritual. The old Suthra that the human body is the first instrument for the achievement of all Dharmas शरीरमाद्यं खलुधर्म साधनं is recognized by him today, as much as by the ancient Rishis. That is why he has made the food and raiment of the poor his one objective, the keynote of his economics. To this end he would lower the standard of life for the middle class, for he does not believe in raising it for the few and depressing it—almost to the zero point—for the millions. 'Soul, eat, drink and be merry,' is not in his philosophy. It is for the body to eat and drink and the soul to be merry. It is the simplest of fares to the human body and the sublimest of joys to the human soul that he

strives for. He would, therefore, restore the producer of food and the maker of raiment to his pristine eminence and would gladly begin the reform with himself. It is thus that he calls himself "a farmer and weaver." His spinning is an intermediate function both real and symbolic, for as P.G. Bridge has said:

> It is Mahatmajee, who is really spinning out the destiny of the whole nation.

And may we not say, of the whole world.

Politics has been regarded as a game of chess, each move of the people being determined by the counter move of the opponent. Open game if it were a game of cards, each player is anxious to peep into or guess the cards that his neighbour has. With Gandhi it is otherwise. He determines his own moves and puts the opponent on the defensive. He discloses his cards and plays an open game. There is no intrigue. There is no more strategy than truth, no higher technique than *Ahimsa.*

His appeal is to the spirit noble in you. He wants to sting the Hindu conscience into right religious action by his cult of fasts. "His soul is bare to the world and he knows how to use the power of silence," as much as of the Fast.

F.G. James :—

> To suffer from, to give love to—these are the discoveries in their time of the *Christ of the ancient and the Christ of the modern world* (Mahatma Gandhi).

"Gandhi today recognizes this dynamic of love, as old Jesus did. He is making use of the same principles but on a larger scale and to a greater end. He prophesies the 'Kingdom of God on Earth.'"

The Modern Christ

That he is the Christ of modern times cannot be disputed. The question is not the acceptance of the already widely recognized fact. The question before mankind to-day is "are we to recognize him now that he has come again."

Gandhi has, in the words of Albert Enstein—

> invented an entirely new and humane technique for the liberation of a subject-nation and has energized his people, roused and consolidated the moral forces in them through his personal example.

Gandhi's strategy now sheathes the sword and now unsheathes, now boycotts councils, now enters them, uses them, works them, walks out of them. General Smuts acknowledged that such a method of moral warfare waged without weapons of violence is irresistible.

The Satyagrahi's way of dealing with an unreasonable intruder or ruler is to walk away from the place temporarily or for ever. In ancient times, whole populations had migrated from the dominion of an unworthy The same advice is tendered by Gandhi to the oppressed. king. The people of the Nilgiri state in the Eastern Agency of Orissa successfully performed a hijrat twice under the advice of Gandhi. Likewise the people of Talcher under the same Agency, and other states flew from ire of their rulers. Twenty years ago, the residents of Cheera-la-Perala in Andhra-desa, which was converted into a municipality against their wishes and in the face of their protest, migrated from their ancient homes and lived for eleven months outside the municipal limits. During the great no tax campaign (agrarian) of 1928, the ryots of Bardoli and Ananda Talukas marched away

to the territory of the Gaekwar of Baroda during the campaign.

Gandhi's spirit of service

Gandhi's service is not in the spirit of condescension but of self-absorption in and self-identification with the larger life of humanity of which his is but a fragment. Now it may be floods and now it may be an earthquake that claims his attention; now it is an inebriate and now, a fallen sister that evokes his sympathy. Now it is the Hindu spinner, now it is the Muslim weaver that appeals to his heart; now it is the civilised man of the plains and now it is the aboriginal of the Agency who is hunted out of his caves that arrests his thoughts; now it is the down-trodden untouchable and now it is the caste Hindu who is equally starving and oppressed that rouses his pity. But every one of these has claimed his services and claimed them always. He has recently told the story of a leper, who has sought out his Ashram in Sevagram and there he is given by Gandhi, quarter and home. But that is not all, Gandhi is anxious to provide for him a field of service in striving for Swaraj under a non-violent scheme, which contemplates the abolition of armies and armaments, albeit, would provide scope for the leper, to join the peace army that must come into being and serve his motherland by allowing himself to be shot if need be.

When might prevails over right, it means the vested interests created are protected by superior physical force *Jiski lathi, uski Bhains*, is a trite but true saying. When therefore, right challenges might, it challenges vested interests. And Gandhi's whole life is one continuous challenge of the vested interests of the white men in

South Africa, the planters in Champaran, the Bureaucracy in Khaira, the police in Borsad, the mill-owners in Ahamedabad, the savarnas amongst the Hindus and British Imperialism in India. That is why his programme has offended some one or other at some stage or other—the student, the professor, the lawyer, the doctor, the public officer, the drink contractor, the capitalist and the sanatani, the merchant and last not least the despot. But one and all of these challenges stand today not only acknowledged as correct, but stand also justified by the reparations made to the sufferers in each case. India's place in the British Commonwealth as a free and equal partner is already acknowledged by the British Government in their statement of August 8, 1940, but India struggles for the declaration of her independence. It is the lot of all seers to be spurned as cranks,—they are before their time,—to be branded as heretics and put to death,—they become martyrs,—to be cavilled at and treated with contempt,—they become leaders ere long. But with Gandhi it is otherwise. The cup of hemlock of Socrates has not been his, neither the guillotine nor the gallows nor the stake that overtook the fate of scientists like Giordano Bruno, Aristotle and Lavoiser, has ever threatened him nor awaits him. His is the rare good fortune of being acknowledged a world-teacher who has eminently fulfilled his promises and succeeded in his plans. At best he is termed a visionary but no great achievement has ever resulted except through the vision, the piercing, penetrating, farseeing vision of prophets. This order of prophets and pravakthas is always waging what in modern military technique has come to be known as the "Battle of the Bulge," the bulge of new thoughts, new ideals, and new standards of conduct in an age ridden by custom and con-

servatism. The moral battles of today become the history of tomorrow, and the code of ethics and rules of conduct of the day after.

Every age is in some sort an age of transition, but our own is characteristically and cardinally an epoch of transition in the very foundations of belief and conduct. The souls of men have become void and into the void have entered in triumph the seven devils of secularity. Gandhi's plan of non-violence is doubtless an experiment. Indeed, he has described his whole autobiography as "My Experiments With Truth" but we cannot forget the fact that "moral principles when they are true, are at bottom only registered generalizations from experience." In these words, has John Morley put in a concrete manner what Gandhi has expressed more abstractly.

> We are living in an age when mental indolence and inertia have come to be regarded as a virtue and intellectual narrowness a sanctity.

It is but one step from these evaluations to that other appraisement which puts a premium on hypocrisy. Life has become compartmentalized. The Law Court is believed to allow what the sacred temple not only interdicts but accurses—namely lying. Politics has come to be regarded as permitting the view which religion has all along forbidden—namely, that all is fair in love and war. The eternal verity of moral principles has been made applicable only to certain places and certain conditions. Gandhi has nailed this lie to the counter. To him life is one and indivisible. Morals are rigid and inelastic, virtue and vice are not relative but absolute. Truth itself peeps in through crevices and does not break in upon us like the day-dawn. A new

faith and philosophy has thus been brought into vogue which wipes out the distinction between politics and religion, religion and morality, morality and social obligation, social obligation and conscience. Gandhi's great struggle is based on a vital recognition of the conflit between principle and expediency, immediate convenience and benefit standing arrayed against remote but abiding good. Workability and even universality of policy cannot gain precedence or empire over the commanding law that, in the words of John Morley, which we have already quoted, "men should cling to Truth and right if the very Heavens fall." At the same time Gandhi is not a "fanatic that injures a good cause by refusing timely and harmless concessions." He has been, to quote Morley's expressions once again:

> Wise but not disingenuous reserved but not dissembling slow but not indolent or pusillanimous. Freedom with order, popular administration without corruption, inalterable respect for law, along with indelible respect for individual right—constitute with him the great moral principles.

Which abide for ever. Gandhi has been a votary of what we may well call the balanced life, the life that harmonizes the play of reason the force of affection and the power of the will, so that "reason prescribes nothing against which the affections revolt, and proscribes nothing which they crave, the will obeying the joint impulses of the two." He does not live under the fallacy that a moral wrong can be local in its evil influence or that a principle alien to the instincts of the nation can be consistent either with its prosperity or its peace.

Open Strategy

We must now say a word upon the technique by

which Satyagraha has been worked out by its author in his own life and in the History of the Congress in accordance with the principles already enunciated. If any one thinks Gandhi is unassailable he is undoubtedly wrong but the fact is that he is found always invulnerable. What is the secret of this quality of invulnerability? Prof. Gilbert Murray answered it twenty years ago before the quality was ever discovered or admitted by the Indians.

> Be careful in dealing with a man who cares nothing for sensual pleasures, nothing for comfort or praise or promotion but is simply determined to do what he believes to be right. He is a dangerous and uncomfortable enemy, because his body which you can always conquer, gives you so little purchase over his soul.

Gandhi has for this reason made his strategy open. A strategy based upon Truth and non-violence cannot but remain open and to him Secrecy is its enemy. His opponent must from moment to moment be appraised of his plans and purposes. That is why he condemned the terrorist movement,—alike for its violence and its secrecy, while he loved to talk to the terrorists and reclaim them from their paths. Equally did he condemn the non-violent movement of Satyagraha in 1932 when it began to course along secret channels.

The basal aspect of Satyagraha is the grip of Truth that it enjoins on its votaries. The Satyagrahis have always given out their programmes to the Police in advance, mixed with them as fellow-labourers in the vineyard of freedom. It is well known however how secret methods which tainted the movement in 1932-33, were openly condemned by Gandhi in 1934 when he was winding up the movement. To our shame be it admitted that when the movement was well on and

when Government became fully aware of its *ins* and *outs* they made all progress virtually impossible and to overcome such unexpected impediments, the Satyagrahis of later batches as well as those that had early releases, thought it wiser to continue the movement even by adopting secret methods than to succumb to the vigilance of the opponent. Men being disguised in foreign dresses to ward off suspicions was not an uncommon feature when a session of the Congress—which was declared an unlawful body was attempted to be held in Calcutta and at Delhi. Secret circulation of literature, Typewriters and Cyclostyle machines working in secret, shadow cabinets and dummy dictators—all these tended to lower the prestige of this sacred movement and bring it down to the level of an under-ground organization. When Gandhi learnt about these methods he condemned them and wound up the movement itself formally in April 1934. Often times steps were taken to hide the funds and this measure received equally severe condemnation at Gandhi's hands for the whole principle and essence of Satyagraha lay in surrendering our body, our assets, our freedom to the enemy, not in trying to rescue as much of them as could be saved by hook or by crook. Secrecy is another name for fear as well as untruth as Gregg explains. Non-violence compels internal cleanliness and constant introspection. That is why Gandhi is never tired nor ashamed of warning the Indian National Congress of the corruption that tainted its enlistment of Congress members and its conduct of Congress elections—especially after the ministers had taken office. That our own introspection should have encouraged outsiders to throw stones on us, was no reason why we should have been remiss in purging ourselves

of our sins. Where, in the world, have you come across an organization whose leader has publicy proclaimed its own corruption and whose High Command has publicly dealt with its erring ministers? The strategy of non-violence consists in compelling self-respect for ourselves from the outside world. Corruption lowers and therefore jeopardizes our chances of success; that is why Gandhi's organization of Civil Disobedience of 1940, stands in marked contrast with the methods pursued in 1932. He had at first informed the Viceroy that he was sending only two Satyagrahis to jail in the 1940 Movement. Later, when he, after putting off his fast, decided to extend the range of individual Satyagraha, he informed the Viceroy again of his changed plans. His instructions to his following in the Congress are elaborate and are given elsewhere in full.

When all is said and done, we must admit we are as yet in the rudimentary stage of the evolution of Satyagraha and its technique and to study a movement while it is imperfect or even inchoate, is perhaps as difficult and delicate a task as one may be called upon to discharge,—the more so, because the ardent votaries thereof who believe in its mighty potentialities and have become, therefore, the butt of ridicule by its opponents and the object of hatred by its enemies. All great movements have passed through similar stages. They are always interpreted—be it purposely or inadvertently—as the equivalent of their counterfeits, at best as but the variants of the cruder forms in which perhaps they had their beginnings. It is as if a diamond is studied as carbon or graphite with which it is identical in composition and of which it is the isomer. Satyagraha has sometimes been likewise equated to mere passive resistance. But the two movements are substantially dif-

ferent, even as the scintillations of the gem in the jewel differ from the dark element,—the black diamond—of the scientist in the laboratory. Nay more, passsive resistance and Satyagraha exhibit diametrically opposite features. Yet one need not be surprised that Satyagraha though it was not initiated consciously by its founder as a kind of passive resistance, had been preceded earlier by some such manifestations shortly before Gandhi initiated his movement, that is during Besant's internment in 1917. But with the advent of Gandhi on to the arena of the Congress, Satyagraha began to be understood in its right sense, only the earlier misunderstandings had to be cleared, which were to effect that it was a revival of passive resistance.

As passive resistance, it was a movement of bitterness and pride not without a tinge of hatred and violence. As non-co-operation, it was the attitude of sulky and sullen people, angry with their rulers and anxious to wound but unable to strike. As Civil Disobedience it was the *noun* that was followed and not the *adjective*. Later, however, the idea of civility gradually gained recognition and paved the way for the next step of evolution—Satyagraha. Ere long, we saw that the basis of Satyagraha was nothing short of love and non-violence, non-violence not to be a negative factor but as a positive force being equivalent to "that love which does not burn others but burns itself to death." When, therefore, the Chauri Chaura incident occurred, it was considered grave enough for the whole country to be punished, instead of the District of Gorakhpur being isolated and penalised. We thus have discovered how Satyagraha was not merely a physical but a truly moral and spiritual force which is exacting in its demands and which in its nature is active, aggressive and dynamic.

Satyagraha which sprang out of the carnage of the Jallianwalabagh massacre itself converted into ashes by the massacre of Chauri Chaura. The Satyagrahi was since then plunged into a world of new values in which hatred and corruption, fear, and cowardice, anger and vengeance at once have yielded place to love, and purity, courage and self-suffering, patience and forgiveness, in which too, wealth has yielded place to service and in which the enemy is not to be conquered but converted. Every Satyagrahi is to be prepared to welcome death casting off all fear which revolves round oneself,—fear of man, of Government, of society, of poverty and of death. Non-co-operation as a discipline, as a Sadhana has therefore become a means of training and self-sacrifice pursued in that true spirit of humility which alone begets courage and not in that spirit of pride which generates fear. Thus in a bound has the author of the movement sublimated and spiritualised the sordid politics of the day.

Once we adhere to truth and repress our passions and purify ourselves, a love of service and a spirit of humility will naturally follow. Once we subdue anger and practise forgiveness, non-violence will be enthroned as the only arbiter in human relations. Contentment is the root of the tree of Satyagraha,—not asceticism which abandons society but renunciation which moderates wants and subdues passions,—not the abandoning of the world but the spirit of sacrifice in the service of man. The new teaching liberates a volume of energy and imposes on us the duty of seeking intercourse with our enemy even as you withhold co-operation from him. This energy must be directed to the service of the poor and to that end a daily quota of labour is imposed on the Satyagrahi preferably in the form of spinning, pursued

as a sacrament and symbol of our devotion to the cause of the poor. To these ends, it is necessary for the mind to control the body and the spirit to direct the body and the mind, so that the flesh craves for nothing which the intellect condemns and thought does not dwell upon aught that emotion forbids. What can be a better guide or means for the attainment of these ends than abstinence which in relation to thought and speech is *silence* which in relation to food and flesh is *fasting*, and which in relation to passions and emotions is *celibacy*?

Silence

Let us study the technique of Satyagraha under each of these heads. Gandhi works to greater advantage and with more telling effect when he is silent than when he is talking, when he is out of the Congress than when he is in, when he is behind the prison bars than when he is in front of them. For a whole period of one year after the Cawnpore Congress (Dec. 1925), he had observed political silence. But these periods of silence are to him periods of incubation of huge plans, which mature in good time and emerge as full-fledged programmes in due course. When however people revile at *maun* (silence) which to them is mere mockery when they jibe at the tortures of the flesh that *fasting* means, when they ridicule *Brahmacharya* which to them is simply unthinkable, they but indulge in that variety of cavil which has been the inevitable lot of all progressive movements in the early periods of their developments, which however have survived such deprecation and abuse and regenerated the ideals of the rising generations.

On the virtue of silence as a discipline, as a tonic

and as inspiration, we cannot do better than quote Gandhi's own words :—

> I can say that I am an everlastingly silent man now. Only a little while ago, I remained completely silent for nearly two months, and the spell of that silence has not yet broken... Now-a-days, I go into silence at prayer time every evening, and break it for visitors at two o'clock. I broke it today when you came. It has become both a physical and spiritual necessity for me. Originally the step was taken to relieve the sense of pressure. Then I wanted time for writing. However, after I had practised it for some time, I saw the spiritual value of it. It suddenly flashed across my mind that that was the time when I could best hold communion with God. And now, I feel as though I was naturally built for silence.

Gandhi has long taught himself to follow the inner-voice, the zamir as it is called and has learnt from a Trappist monastery in South Africa, most of the inmates of which were under a vow of silence, that "if we want to listen to the still small voice that is always speaking within us, it will not be heard if we continually speak." To this end therefore he has laid down the law that "a seeker after Truth has to be silent." He has understood that precious lesson and known the secret of silence. The missionary who comes to India under the protection of temporal power "miss receptiveness, humility, willingness on their part to identify themselves with the masses of India." (P. 349)

Silence and fasting and celibacy all constitute physical factors in the technique of Satyagraha which yet bear fruit of untold spiritual value. There is however a duality of the spirit—namely, which forms the key to the character of the Satyagrahi.

There is urgent need on more practical grounds than theoretical or spiritual, for the exercise of the

principles of Ahimsa just at this juncture. The refusal to injure life as well as rely on sword-force both imply a measure of forgiveness such as is preached in the Sermon on the Mount.

> In the British record [says Dr. Wood] there is much that needs to be forgiven. The relations between the peoples of India and the British have been poisoned by Imperialism and perhaps only a complete severance of the connection can dispel the poison. And clearly the time has come when India must decide her own destiny under leaders of her own choosing. If, indeed we must part, can we not part in the spirit of forgiveness and forbearance?

Such a parting may really lead to a re-union on terms honourable alike to both parties and then the Empire will be changed over to a world Commonwealth of nations wedded to abiding principles of humanity.

To forget and forgive is a commendable quality not merely in sports but in litigation, society and domestics. Its pre-eminence therefore in a Satyagrahi is all the more unchallengeable. We have explained how anger is at the root of many failings and foibles in life and the remedy to it is *Kshama* or forgiveness. Says Gandhi :—

> In the dictionary of non-violent person, there is no such word as external enemy but even for supposed enemy he will have nothing but compassion in his heart. He will believe that no man is intentionally wicked, that there is no man but is gifted with the faculty to discriminate between right and wrong, and that if that faculty were to be fully developed, it would surely mature into non-violence. He will, therefore, pray to God that He may give the supposed enemy a sense of right and bless him. His prayer for himself will always be that the spring of compassion in him may ever be flowing, and that he may ever grow in moral strength so that he may face death fearlessly.

Elsewhere Gandhi says :—

Forgiveness is the virtue of the strong.

CHAPTER VI

FASTS

I

A somewhat strange looking step in the technique of Satyagraha and the life and career of a Satyagrahi relates to the weight attached to fasts and fasting. Indeed the fast strikes the mind of the English-educated folks as something bordering on the ridiculous. But tc the Hindu even the feasts and festivals are an incentive to fasting. A feast for one thing—with an Indian means a late meal, and a festival involves ceremonies and observances which almost take one near a fast. The attitude of reverence and devotion which the observance of Indian festivals, Hindu and Muslim and Christian, is calculated to engender is greatly assisted by such fasting.

Gandhi had, for the first time, prescribed a fast to the public just before the inauguration of Satyagraha in 1919, in connection with the Rowlatt Bill agitation. We give below three extracts from his writings which depict his faith in fasts :—

> 1. Fasting is an institution as old as Adam. It has been resorted to for self-purification or for some ends noble as well as ignoble. Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed fasted so as to see God face to face. Ramchandra fasted for the sea to give way for his army of monkeys. Parvati fasted to secure Mahadev himself as her Lord and Master. In my fasts, I have but followed these great examples, no doubt for ends

much less noble than theirs.

*   *   *

2. It is now apparent that in addition to truth and non-violence, a satyagrahi should have the confidence that God will grant him the necessary strength and that, if there is the slightest impurity in the fast, he will not hesitate to renounce it at once. Infinite patience, firm resolve, single-mindedness of purpose, perfect calm, and no anger must of necessity be there. But since it is impossible for a person to develop all these qualities all at once, no one who has not devoted himself to following the laws of ahimsa should undertake a satyagrahic fast.

*   *   *

3. Let the public know that at a very early age, I began fasting for self-purification and then I took a prolonged fast for an erring son of mine. This was soon after followed by a still more prolonged fast for an erring daughter of a very dear friend. In both these cases, the results justified the fasts. The first public fast that I undertook was in South Africa in connection with sufferings of the indentured who had joined the Satyagraha struggle in South Africa. I have no recollection of a single experiment of mine in fasting having been a fruitless effort. In addition, I had the experience of priceless peace and unending joy during all these fasts, and I have come to the conclusion that fasting, unless it is the result of God's grace, is useless starvation if not much worse.

From these views relating to his earlier fasts, let us take a leap to the latest report of Gandhi's apprehended fast during the war period (Aug. to Dec. 40), which elicited the following statement from him. (Nov. 7, 1940)

I have told my friends of the Working Committee of my premonition that I may have to undertake one more fast during my life, and that this may even take place sooner than I had thought, [says Gandhiji in *Harijan*]. But the fact is that so far as I can remember, I have never undertaken a

> single one of my public fasts with any premeditation on my part. All my fasts have come to me on the spur of the moment, gifts, from God as I have called them. Their results have been invariably good. And in any event, I have no regrets regarding them...If God has a fast in store for me, it will surely come and it will surely bring good in its wake. In all things His will be done.

Of the many fasts Gandhi has undertaken in public that in connection with the strike of the Ahmedabad mill-hands in October 1918, was his first on the Indian soil.

> "I was in a most delicate situation," says Gandhi in his *Autobiography*. 'The mill-hands' case was strong. Shrimati Anasuyaben had to battle against her own brother, Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai, who led the fray on behalf of the mill-owners. My relations with them were friendly, and that made fighting them the more difficult. I held consultations with them and requested them to refer the dispute to arbitration, but they refused to recognise the principle.

Gandhi, therefore, advised the labourers to strike work and took from them a pledge to remain completely non-violent and to remain firm. The strike went on smoothly for two weeks.

> But, at last, they began to show signs of flagging, [says Gandhi]. Their attitude towards the blacklegs became more and more menacing as the strike seemed to be shaken ...Finally the information was brought to me that the strikers had begun to totter. I felt deeply troubled and set to thinking furiously as to what my duty was in the circumstances.

It was then that Gandhi took his decision for this historic fast.

> One morning, [says he] it was at a mill-hands' meeting, while I was still groping and unable to see my way clearly, the light came to me unbidden and all by themselves the

> words came to my lips...'Unless the strikers rally' [he declared to the meeting] 'and continue the strike till a settlement is reached, or till they leave the Mills altogether, I will not touch any food.' Tears began to course down Anusuyaben's cheeks.
>
> The labourers broke down and shouted 'Not you but we shall fast. It would be monstrous if you were to fast. Please forgive us for our lapse, we will now remain faithful to our pledge to the end.'
>
> The net result of it was, [says Gandhi] that an atmosphere of good will was created all round. The hearts of the mill-owners were touched, and they set about discovering some means for a settlement. Anusuyaben's house became the venue of their discussions. Sjt. Anandshankar Dhruva intervened and was in the end appointed arbitrator and the strike was called off after I had fasted only for three days. And thus a settlement was reached after 21 days' strike.

But whatever settlements and success may have resulted, the fact remains that Gandhi's conception of Labour is altogether different from that of politicians and Labour leaders. Here is his latest message to the mill-workers of Ahmedabad (Dec. 4, '40).

> Even since I came in contact with you, I have tried to impress on you that your liberation lies in your own hands. The value of labour is far greater than its price in money. You can enhance or reduce your price as you desire. But if you are satisfied with its cash value, you put your own limitation upon your own worth.

Now we shall study some of the many fasts which followed during the past twenty years. The public fast on 6th April, 1919 along with All-India as a protest against the Rowlatt Act, the "Black Bill' as it termed was the first of this series.

This was followed by his five days' purificatory fast undertaken as a sort of *Kuffarah* or *prayaschitta* for

the crime of Chauri Chaura, in February 1922.

> I must undergo personal cleansing, [he wrote] I must become a fitter instrument able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere about me. My prayers must have much deeper truth and humility about them than their evidence. And for me there is nothing so helpful and cleansing as a fast accompanied by the necessary mental co-operation...A fast undertaken for fuller self-expression, for the attainment of the spirit's supremacy over the flesh, is a most powerful factor in one's evolution. After deep consideration, therefore, I am imposing on myself a five days' continuous fast.
>
> All fasting and penance—must as far as possible be secret. But my fasting is both a penance and a punishment has to be public. It is penance for me and punishment for those whom I try to serve, for whom I love to live and would equally love to die. They have unintentionally sinned against the laws of the Congress, though they were sympathisers, if not actually connected with it. Probably they hacked the constables—their countrymen and fellow beings—with my name on their lips. The only way love punishes is by suffering and I would let them know that I would suffer for their breach of the Congress.

The acute Hindu-Muslim tension in the country following numerous riots led Gandhi to perform his greatest penance for Hindu-Muslim unity in 1924. Announcing a fast for 21 days, Gandhi issued the following statement from Delhi on September 18, 1924:—

> The recent events have proved unbearable for me. My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray. I have done so in connection with my own dearest ones. Nothing evidently that I say or write can bring the two communities together. I am therefore imposing on myself a fast of 21 days commencing from today. It is both a penance and a prayer. As a penance, I need not have taken the public

into my confidence but I publish the fast as (let me hope) an effective prayer both to Hindus and Mussalmans, who have hitherto worked in unison, not to commit suicide. I respectfully invite the heads of all the communities, including Englishmen, to meet and end this quarrel which is a disgrace to religion and to humanity. It seems as if God has been dethroned. Let us reinstate Him in our hearts.

* * *

A man with a grain of faith in God [he wrote a week later,] never loses hope, because he ever believes in the ultimate triumph of Truth. A man of God never strives after untruth and therefore he can never lose hope. On the contrary, his hope shines the brightest, 'amidst encircling gloom.' There is a beautiful Tamil proverb which says 'God is the sole help of the helpless.' The truth of this never came upon me with so much force as it has come today. Handling large masses of men, dealing with them, speaking and acting for them is no joke for a man whose capacity God has so circumscribed. One has, therefore, to be ever on the watch. And the reader may rest assured that I took the final step after I had realised to the full my utter helplessness. And I cried out to God even like Draupadi when she seemed to be abandoned by her five protectors. And her cry did not ascend to the Almighty in vain. That cry must not be from the lip. It has to be from the deepest recesses of one's heart. And, therefore, such a cry is only possible when one is in anguish. Mine has expressed itself in a fast which is by no means adequate for the issues involved. My heart continually says:

Rock of Ages cleft for me
Let me hide myself in Thee

* * *

The Unity Conference met at Delhi on September 26, 1924, and was attended by Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Sikhs and Christians including Englishmen. Dr. Foss Westcott, the Metropolitan of India, was amongst those present. The results of the Conference

at the moment were not appreciable, yet the Conference made a valuable contribution to unity. "The new Spirit must permeate downwards," said the Metropolitan. "Obviously, it will take time but one can hope that the process has commenced."

Gandhi's fasts have been watched by eminent personages with great anxiety and to the lasting benefit of succeeding generation of readers. We have seen that one such fast was that undertaken in expiation "of the sins unwittingly committed," which led to a succession of riots in the year 1924. The most Rev. Dr. Foss Westcott, Metropolitan of India, and Lord Bishop of Calcutta, was one, who watched the three Weeks' fast of September, 1924, and took part in the Peace Conference held in Delhi, composed of representatives of every shade of opinion, in order that they might take any action possible to remove the cause of the fast. Although Gandhi has made his fasts,—some definite, others indefinite, yet he said in 1924, that he did not want to die by fasting, for, the object of his fasts is "to live a better and purer life for the service of the country and God." Having stated this much, he added that "if he ever reached a crisis, when the choice lay between death and food, he would certainly break the fast." His fasts are meant to stimulate a real heart-unity and enable people to speak out the truth as they saw it. Dr. Westcott quotes a message which appeared in the *Statesman* of Calcutta on "Unity Day"—October 8th, 1924, which runs as follows:—

> Where political arguments, obvious and cogent, had utterly failed, the religious motions generated by Mr. Gandhi's fast succeeded. There remains the yet harder task of inducing the milliors to practise toleration. (P. 309)

Now we pass on to the communal decision or award as it is sometimes called by Ramsay MacDonald in 1932, after the Second Round Table Conference.

> The Award is not, however, the disease [wrote Rajaji then], It was only a symptom that revealed the nature and the terrible character of the evil. It threatened to split Hinduism and establish six crores of Hindus as different altogether from and as strangers to Hinduism. Gandhiji felt that this was a symptom that called for the knife.

On August 18, 1932, the next day after Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had announced his decision on the communal question, Gandhi wrote to the British Premier that the only way by which he could resist his Award was by declaring "a perpetual fast unto death from food of any kind."

> It may be, [he went on in that ultimatum], that my judgment is warped and that I am wholly in error in regarding separate electorates for the Depressed Classes as harmful to them or to Hinduism. If so, I am not likely to be in the right with reference to other parts of my philosophy of life. In that case, my death by fasting will be at once a penance for my error and a lifting of a weight from off those numberless men and women who have childlike faith in my wisdom. Whereas, if my judgment is right, as I have little doubt it is, the contemplated step is but due to the fulfilment of the scheme of life which I have tried for more than a quarter of a century, apparently not without considerable success.

It was on the morning of 13th September, that the whole of India, was convulsed by the news of Gandhi's resolve to fast unto death." It was not India alone that was thus upset by the fast to come. Says a writer in the *Sunday Times*—

> Its reverberations were felt in England and were echoed back from far-off America. The first feelings evoked by it were those of wonder and incredulity. The world was too stun-

> ned to catch the meaning or purpose of this challenge, at once so new and so unique.

Gandhi wrote to those that tried to dissuade him:

> I have no doubt about the truth of the Inner Voice, nor have I any doubt that you will soon see the light out of the darkness of this sorrow. Then about two thousand years ago, there was another scene of similar anguish and a similar answer was given at Jerusalem to the friends that wept for love of their Master.

The leaders of the Depressed Classes and the caste Hindus were much concerned over the fast. Protracted negotiations started and finally an agreement was signed in Yerrawada Gaol. The question, however, on everyone's lips was: "Would the British Government accept it?" The British Cabinet hastily met and as Gandhi's condition was becoming more and more critical, it finally decided to accept the Yerrawada Agreement. Gandhi broke his fast on the evening of September 26th. The whole nation celebrated the "Untouchability Abolition Week" from 27th September to 2nd October. The Poet (Tagore) presided over the meeting held at Poona where the fast took place and delivered a stirring address worthy in every way of the occasion:—

> Today in our determined efforts to join Mahatmaji in his noble task of removing the burden of ages, [he declared], the burden of disrespect upon the bent back of those who have been stigmatized for the accident of their birth, a sin of wilful denial to a large body of our countrymen of sympathy which is the birthright of all human beings, we are not only casting off the chain of India's moral enslavement, but indicating a path for all humanity. We are challenging victimization wherever and in whatever form it may exist, to stand the test of relentless questioning of a conscience which Mahatmaji has brought to bear upon our day.

In addition to these fasts, some of which were meant as a penance and some as a punishment. Gandhi undertook a fast of twenty-one days in the year 1933; May. But it was a fast with no particular aim in view meant merely as "heart prayer for the purification of self and associates for greater vigilance and watchfulness."

> I have no desire to die, [said he], I want to live for the cause but I live for my good, my fellow workers' greater purity, greater application and greater dedication. I want more workers of unassailable purity, shocking cases of impurity have come under my notice. I would like my fast to be as an urgent appeal to such people to leave the cause alone.

There were again two short fasts since 1933, one of which lasted one week in August 1934, being undertaken as a penance for the assault by certain reformers upon a Sanatanist leader. It must be also mentioned that after Gandhi had advised individual civil disobedience as from 1st of August 1933, and he himself was arrested on that date. He was fasting off and on because he had been deprived of the privileges of conducting the "Harijan" from inside the jail until at last he was released on the 23rd of that month unconditionally when he was already in a dangerous state of health and was removed to the Sasson Hospital Poona.

The events of the next fast at Rajkot are of too recent a date to need recapitualtion at length. It was in the true sense of the term "a God-given Fast." For, when Gandhi proceeded to Rajkot to expostulate with the late Thakore Saheb, whom he considered as a son, for backing out of the agreement which he entered into with the Praja Mandal, he had no idea that fast was in the offing.

The thing came in a flash on the night of the 2nd March (1939), after the last of that series of agonising talks with Durbar Virawalla, which the limit, [says Mahadev Desai in *Harijan*]. We need not go into the intricacies of politics that developed round the fast. Suffice it to say that finally, Gandhi sought the Viceroy's intervention and the whole question was referred to the arbitration of Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Federal Chief Judge.

The Rajkot fast discussed

The Rajkot fast stands out foremost amongst all the fasts of Gandhi for the complication of the issues involved in it during its currency as well as for the still greater complexities it led to after it had been concluded. "The four days' fast" wrote he, "set me thinking of the qualifications required in a Satyagrahi." And he laid down the following :—

1. He must have a living faith in God, for He is his only Rock.
2. He must believe in truth and non-violence as his creed and therefore, have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his suffering.
3. He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up his life and his possessions.
4. He must be a habitual khadi-wearer and spinner. This is essential for India.
5. He must be a teetotaller and be free from the use of other intoxicants in order that his reason may be always unclouded and his mind constant.
6. He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline such as may be laid down from time to time.
7. He should carry out the jail rules unless they are specially devised to hurt his self-respect.

The qualifications are not to be regarded as exhaustive. They are illustrative.

Gandhi gave a category of maxims which the people of Rajkot had to observe.

> 1. Educate yourselves, abstain from spirituous liquors and cultivate simplicity.
> 2. Believe in constructive programme.
> 3. Say not 'mine is right,' but say 'what is right is mine.'
> 4. Avoid pomp, jealousy and bad habits.
> 5. We do not believe in encroaching upon other people's rights.
> 6. It is our duty to protect the afflicted.
> 7. Forgiveness is the virtue of the strong.
> 8. Speak only that which has value and never a word thoughtlessly.
> 9. Be manly if you will be free.

Controversy over the Rajkot fast

There was an acute controversy as to whether Gandhi was within his rights and within the limits of Satyagraha in respect of the Rajkot Fast and its sequence. Gandhi himself defended his position week in, week out, but at the end of April 1939, he gave way and admitted he was defeated. The psychology that lay behind his conclusion is best expressed in his own words written on the train to Bombay on 24-4-39 :—

> Rajkot seems to have robbed me of my youth. I never knew that I was old. Now I am weighed down by the knowledge of decrepitude. I never knew what was to lose hope. But it seems to have been cremated in Rajkot. My *ahimsa* has been put to a test such as it has never been subjected to before.
>
> I have given fifteen precious days to have the Committee

contemplated in the award of the Chief Justice of India. But I seem to be as far from it as ever. I have found unexpected difficulties in my path. The award was acclaimed throughout India as a complete victory for the Sardar. But it has been effectively used against me for accusing me of a breach of promise to the Muslims and the Bhayats. The promise that the Thakore Saheb had made, was on my return from Delhi transferred to my poor shoulders. The plain meaning of all I had said could only be that I should help the Thakore Saheb to carry out his promise, though, according to the award, I need not. Whatever the reason might be, both the Muslims and the Bhayats relieved the Thakore Saheb of the duty of fulfilment of the promise. Failing to placate the Muslims and the Bhayats, I sent the Thakore Saheb seven names of the Parishad. In reply I was called upon to prove that six out of the seven names were Rajkot State subjects. One would have thought that I would at least be given an inkling of the objections. If every statement made by men presumed to be fairly honourable could be challenged, it might take a year to finish an inquiry into the facts of each case. But I have sent the required proofs.

When I seemed to have come to the end of my resources and my patience, I sent a letter of complaint to the Resident as the local representative of the Paramount Power seeking his aid in terms of the Viceregal assurances given to me. He invited me to an interview. And whilst we were discussing the ways and means, an idea flashed across my mind that I should end the agony by foregoing the right of nomination of members of the Committee, and so I made what I thought, and the Resident admitted, was a sporting offer. It was that the whole Committee should be selected by the Thakore Saheb to report in accordance with the terms of the notification of 26th December last, provided that its report should be shown to the Parishad, and that if they found that the report did not carry out the terms of the notification, their dissenting note and the original report should be sent to the Chief Justice for his decision.. The Resident sent my offer to Darbar Shri Virawala, but H. H. the Thakore Saheb has turned it down.

Agonising experiences of the fifteen days have resulted in

my making the discovery that my ahimsa should be voted down as failure if the Thakore Saheb and Darbar Shri Vira wala were to feel that they had to give anything under pressure from above. My *ahimsa* demanded that I should remove that feeling. And so when the opportunity came to me, I tried to assure Darbar Shri Virawala that I took no delight in invoking the assistance of the Paramount Power. Apart from Ahimsa, my connection with Rajkot should impose the restrainte on me. I assured him that my spontaneous offer to Mr. Gibson was an effort in that direction. He immediately retorted: 'But if you are not satisfied with His Highness's Committee's report, you claim the right to scrutinise the report in the light of the notification, and if the Parishad dissents, you want to have the report and the dissent to be examined by the Hon. the Chief Justice of India. Do you call this removing the feeling of pressure? Why not trust His Highness and his adviser through and through? You may not get all you want, but whatever you get will be charged with his good will and will carry a promise of full delivery. Do you know what the Parishad people have said about the Thakore Saheb and me? Is that the way of a people desiring reforms from their Princes?' There was bitterness in his speech and contempt for the Parishad people. But with the sudden consciousness of my imperfect handling of *ahimsa* instead of parrying the blow, I recognised the force of his argument as showing want of faith in the essential goodness of human nature and littleness of my own belief in *ahimsa*. And so our conversation went on and covered many proposals. But it was inconclusive. I was no nearer solution of the tangle. Nevertheless I parted with the feeling that we had come to know each other better, and that in trying to woo Darbar Shri Virawala I was on the right track.

And so I presented this new line of approach to my co-workers. They had more than once told that Darbar Shri Virawala was the source of all the evil that had descended upon Rajkot, and that his removal would mean for them full Swaraj. I had no difficulty in showing them that what they were thinking of was good government, not self-government. At this meeting which only took place

yesterday, I told them that if they accepted my explanation of *ahimsa*, they would have to set their heart not on getting rid of Darbar Shri Virawala, but on converting him. This they could do only if they would set about finding his good points and working at them. They must develop infinite faith in the capacity of *ahimsa* to neutralise every person of *himsa*. True *ahimsa* lay in running into the mouth of *himsa*. If cows could be credited with intelligence, it is conceivable that given a sufficient number of such cows, who would run into the tiger's mouth, the latter would lose the relish for cow flesh and change his nature. They must, therefore, shed their fear of Darbar Shri Virawala and their disbelief in the power of *ahimsa* to achieve the seemingly impossible. They listened to this (to them) new doctrine with attention. I did not ask them whether they were convinced. I hope they were. They would quite legitimately have asked me: 'Are you yourself so convinced of the correctness of this extraordinary attitude you have commended to us as to tear the award to pieces and simply rely upon the goodness of Darbar Shri Virawala's heart?' If they had asked this question, I would have been obliged to say: 'I have not yet found the requisite courage. Ahimsa accrues only to the courageous.'

And so I have left empty-handed, with body shattered, hope cremated. Rajkot has been to me a priceless laboratory. My patience has been sorely tried by the tortuous politics of Khathiawad. I have asked the workers to confer with Darbar Shri Virawala, to forget me and Sardar Patel, and if they get enough to satisfy their least wants, they may accept the offer without reference to either of us. I have told Darbar Shri Virawala, 'I am defeated. May you win. Placate the people by giving as much as possible and wire to me so as to revive the hope which I seem to have lost for the moment.'

The final recognition of his error was made by Gandhi on the 17th of May, 1939. That evening he decided after an exhaustive discussion with his co-workers that he should renounce the advantages accruing from the award of the Chief Justice. He tendered an

apology through the columns of the Harijan (May 20, 1939), to the Viceroy for the unnecessary strain "I have put upon him in my weakness" and likewise to the Chief Justice "for having been the cause of putting him to the labour which had he known better, he need not have gone through," and finally to the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Sri Virawala,—to the latter "for the evil thoughts that in common with my co-workers, I have harboured about him. He confessed himself guilty of playing what might be called a double game, i.e., hanging the sword of the Award over his head and wooing him and expecting him of his own free will to advise the Thakore Saheb to grant liberal reforms."

Under the new technique, Gandhi stated that the Rajkot recantation taught him to urge not merely a withdrawal of charges for instance in Travancore against Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, but to recognise that Travancoreans have to reckon both with the Maharaja and with his Dewan.

What is your new technique? asks C. F. Andrews and here is Gandhi's answer:—

> It is a nearer approach to non-violence, nothing new. If I go to the Viceroy I would walk to Simla or he must fly to Delhi. I never went in a car or a victoria in South Africa except when I drove with Gokhale and only then. I never motored. I always walked up to General Smuts. Fasting is a good form of coercion. It gives an increasing opportunity for a drunkard father to retrieve himself, not shooting or poisoning. That was why I fasted against Virawala—but I was harsh on him. On my return from Delhi I felt that never was my fast so brilliant of results. But a few days later, I felt that it was faulty because I had sought assistance which I should not have.

Let us conclude this chapter with Gandhi's statement of November 7th, 1940—on the subject of fasts—

which runs as follows :—

> I have been receiving numerous telegrams asking me not to undertake the contemplated fast. Almost all of these telegrams are from friends who are concerned about my health and who think that if I live I can still render useful service to the country. There are one or two, bitterly accusing me and telling me that fasting has no place in the politics of the country, that it disturbs the atmosphere and impairs the efficiency of the opposition to the Government in the fight for freedom. I wish to thank both friends and critics. Members of the Working Committee and I also had a long discussion over the contemplated fast.
>
> In view of the extension of individual civil disobedience, the idea of a fast naturally remains in abeyance. But I must say that nothing that I have heard has dislodged me from the position that I had consistently held about the relevance of fasts and the propriety of fasts in all walks of life, including political, I admit that it is a new weapon. I admit also that the use of that weapon is not open to any but specialists even as the use of Civil Disobedience is not open to everybody. But if the use of Civil Disobedience is open only to those who are qualified for it, the use of fasting requires infinitely larger qualifications. I hold that I possess those qualifications. I have had God-given opportunities of training myself in that direction consciously since 1906 or 1907, that means thirty-four years. But a fast cannot be undertaken mechanically. It can be undertaken only in obedience to the promptings of an Unseen Power, call it the Inner Voice, God, or whatever other name you like to give that Power.
>
> I have mentioned the possibility of my fasting, because something in me is prompting me to it. I am myself fighting against it, for, however willing the spirit may be, flesh is weak. I know that when unable to drink an adequate quantity of water during a fast, it becomes almost unbearable, especially in the initial stages. But however weak the flesh may be, I know that the weakness can be conquered when that Unseen Power dominates in me to the exclusion of every other force. That feeling has not yet come to me.

Until it comes, naturally there will be no fast. If it comes I myself feel powerless to listen to the friendly importunities and kingly intervention of friends or the anger of fearless critics. Therefore I will beseech all to hold themselves in patience and watch developments.

Of course, it is open to everyone to help me in the crisis through which the country is passing. I have shown numerous ways in which every body, friend and critic, can help. I have no desire to make an elaborate statement indicating the ways in which people can help. Having stopped the publication of the *Harijan* weekly, I have lost all desire of making public statements. This I am compelled to make to thank the numerous inquirers and to allay public anxiety.

Are Fasts a Coercion?

Are fasts a form of coercion? This question is answered by Mr. Gregg as follows:—Very often Gandhi has been assailed on the score that in fasting—sometimes to death, sometimes, to the verge of death, Gandhi is seeking to exercise coercion on the enemy—a process wholly repugnant to Satyagraha. Surely the founder of the movement must know better whether any tactic adopted by him is a violation or even a negation of the very movement he has inaugurated. If coercion is the bringing to bear upon an enemy superior power or influence operating on his freedom of thought, judgment and action, it depends upon what kind of superiority is being brought into play—whether the whole process is objectionable or otherwise. If A brings his superior intellect to bear upon B's mind, that cannot be an objectionable procedure, nor if A prevails upon B through his superior moral powers or force. What constitutes coercion is superior physical power in other words 'superior' violence. Satyagraha implies the invitation of suffering to oneself. That suffering may

be measured or unmeasurable, may be limited or limitless. A fast is limitless and immeasurable suffering. If therefore the cause is just, and the time opportune, there is no reason why a fast against a government or a community or a capitalist should be considered coercion. Gandhi has tried all these, when he fasted against the Rajkot State, against the Caste Hindu and British Government on the question of Harijans and against the Ahmedabad mill-owners. But it must be admitted that, being the highest form of self-suffering it requires circumspection as well as judgment before it can be undertaken, and in any case it is not a form of Satyagraha that can be lightly embarked upon by all and sundry for any and every purpose.

The latest testimony (Nov. 1940), to the philosophy of fasts is borne by the decision of the Pope to fast for seven days in order to induce Europe to see God and restore peace amongst its nations.

Picketing and Boycott

One unfailing method of Gandhi's in pursuing Satyagraha is picketing. This word became popular in July 1921, when liquor shops were first sought to be picketed and later foreign cloth shops were sought to be brought within its purview. Very soon picketing of lawyers attending courts, of students attending examinations, of legislators attending Councils—all became the order of the day. The proposals for a settlement between Government and Gandhi failed in 1921-22, during the Viceroyalty of Lord Reading partly on the question of picketing and were about to break in the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations of February, March, 1931, on the same point. Gandhi had laid down

that picketing is a right in common law, that it is a moral right and must not in any way be deducted or restrained so long as there is no molestation of the persons or places picketed and so long as there are no hostile demonstrations or deprecatory cries. Whether it be in picketing or in strikes, Gandhi has always insisted on freedom from violence, from molestation of masters or blacklegs. It goes without saying that amongst the conditions pre-requisite to the strikes are the justice of the cause, the self-reliance of the strikers and unity amongst their ranks.

Picketing was defined in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of March 1931. In the same pact occurs an important understanding on the question of boycott. A subtle distinction has all along been made by Gandhi between boycott of British goods and boycott of foreign goods. He has always contended that while the latter is an economic measure based upon ideals of self-sufficiency and self-reliance, the former carries with it a tinge of hatred and therefore should not be permitted. Gandhi, therefore, hastened to call off boycott of British goods, the moment the Gandhi-Irwin agreement was signed on the fifth of March, 1931. The relevant clauses in the Pact both on boycott and on picketing are well worth recalling :—

> As regards the boycott of foreign goods, there are two issues involved, firstly the character of the boycott and secondly, the methods employed in giving effect to it. The position of Government is as follows: They approve of the encouragement of Indian industries as part of the economic and industrial movement designed to improve the material condition of India, and they have no desire to discourage methods of propaganda, persuasion or advertisement pursued with this object in view which do not interfere with the freedom of action of individuals or are not pre-

judicial to the maintenance of Law and Order. But the boycott of non-Indian goods (except of cloth which has been applied to all foreign cloth) has been directed during the civil disobedience movement chiefly, if not exclusively, against British goods, and in regard to these it has been admittedly employed in order to exert pressure for political ends.

It is accepted that a boycott of this character and organised for this purpose, will not be consistent with the participation of representatives of the Congress in a frank and friendly discussion of constitutional questions between representatives of British India, of the Indian States, and of His Majesty's Government and political parties in England, which the settlement is intended to secure. It is therefore agreed that the discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement connotes the definite discontinuance of the employment of the boycott of British commodities as a political weapon and that, in consequence, those who have given up during a time of political excitement the sale or purchase of British goods, must be left free without any form of restraint to change their attitude if they so desire.

In regard to the methods employed in furtherance of the replacement of non-Indian by Indian goods, or against the consumption of intoxicating liquor and drugs, resort will not be had to methods coming within the category of picketing except within the limits permitted by the ordinary law. Such picketing shall be unaggressive and it shall not involve coercion, intimidation, restraint, hostile demonstration, obstruction to the public, or any offence under the ordinary law. If and when any of these methods is employed in any place, the practice of picketing in that place will be suspended.

"Does a Satyagrahi require physical training? If so, of what kind?" is a question often put to us. Gandhi has been pressed to revive the volunteer movement after the suspension of Satyagraha in 1934 (May). He has set his face against it all along and has not looked with favour upon the training imparted to volunteers in certain provinces in 1940. Gandhi has dealt with the subject in full and his observations are directly germane to the discussion of the Technique

of Satyagraha.

We all know more or less writes he, what military training is like. But we have hardly ever thought that non-violent training must be of a different kind. Nor have we ever cared to discover whether in the past such training was given anywhere in the world. I am of opinion that it used to be given in the past and is even now being given in a haphazard way. The various exercises of *Hatha Yoga* are in this direction. The physical training given by means of these imparts, among other things, physical health, strength, agility, and the capacity to bear heat and cold.

In olden days, this ancient type of non-violent training still exists, though I know that there is room in it for improvement. I do not know either that the author of this science had any idea of mass non-violence. The exercises had at their back the desire for individual salvation. The object of the various exercises was to strengthen and purify the body in order to secure control of the mind. The mass non-violence we are now thinking of applies to people of all religions, and, therefore, the rules that may be framed must be such as can be accepted by all believers in Ahimsa.

And then as we are thinking of a non-violent army, that is to say of bringing into being a Satyagraha Sangha, we can but build anew accepting the old as our foundation. Let us then think of the physical training required by a Satyagrahi. If the Satyagrahi is not healthy in mind and body, he may perhaps fail in mustering complete fearlessness.

He should have the capacity to stand guard at a single spot day and night; he must not fall ill even if he has to bear cold and heat and rain; he must have the strength to go to places of peril, to rush to scenes of fire, and the courage to wander about alone in desolate jungles and haunts of death; he will bear, without a grumble, severe beatings, starvation and worse, and will keep to his post of duty without flinching; he will have the resourcefulness and capacity to plunge into a seemingly impenetrable scene of rioting; he will have the longing and capacity to run, with the name of God on his lips, to the rescue of men living on the top storeys of buildings enveloped in flames; he will have the fearlessness to

plunge into a flood in order to rescue people being carried off by it or to jump down a well to save a drowning person. This list can be extended *ad ibitum*. The substance of it all is that we should cultivate the capacity to run to the rescue of people in danger and distress and to suffer cheerfully any amount of hardship that may be inflicted upon us. He who accepts this fundamental principle will easily be able to frame rules of physical training for Satyagrahis. I have a firm conviction that the very foundation of this training is faith in God. If that is absent, all the training one may have received is likely to fail at the critical moment.

Let no one pooh-pooh my statement by saying that the Congress has many people who are ashamed to take the name of God. I am simply trying to state the view in terms of the science of Satyagraha as I have known and developed it. The only weapon of the Satyagrahi is God, by whatsoever name one knows Him. Without Him, the Satyagrahi is devoid of strength before an opponent armed with monstrous weapons. Most people lie prostrate before physical might. But, he who accepts God as his only Protector will remain unbent before the mightiest earthly power.

As faith in God is essential in a Satyagrahi even so is *brahmacharya*. Without *brahmacharya* the Satyagrahi will have no lustre, no inner strength to stand unarmed against the whole world. *Brahmacharya* may have here the restricted meaning of conservation of the vital energy brought about by sexual restraint, and not the comprehensive definition I have given of it. He who intends to live on spare diet and without any external remedies and still wants to have physical strength, has need to conserve his vital energy. It is the richest capital man can ever possess. He who can preserve it ever gains renewed strength out of it. He who uses it up, consciously or unconsciously, will ultimately be impotent. His strength will fail him at the right moment.

It should now be clear that in the physical training of a Satyagrahi there is no room for lethal weapons like the sword or the spear. For far more terrible weapons than we have seen are in existence today, and newer ones are being invented

every day. Of what fear will a sword rid him who has to cultivate the capacity to overcome all fear—real or imaginary? I have not yet heard of a man having shed all fear by learning sword-play. Mahavir and others who imbibed Ahimsa did not do so because they knew the use of weapons but because in spite of the knowledge of their use they shed all fear.

A slight introspection will show that he who has always depended on the sword will find it difficult to throw it away. But having deliberately discarded it he is likely to find his Ahimsa more lasting than that of him who, not knowing its use, fancies he will not fear it. Butt hat does not mean that in order to be truly non-violent one must beforehand possess and know the use of arms. By parity of reasoning, one might say that only a thief can be honest, only a diseased person can be healthy, and only a dissolute person can be a *brahmachari*. The fact is that we have formed the habit of thinking along traditional grooves and will not get out of them. And as we cannot take a detached view we cannot draw the right conclusions and get caught in delusive snares.

There remain two other aspects of the technique of Satyagraha without a reference to which our study of the subject, imperfect as it is, is bound to be incomplete. They are 'prayer and voluntary poverty.' It is difficult to deal with either of these subjects so long as one has not the confidence that one has felt the full force of the former or responded to the urgent call of the latter. With this consciousness of a vaccum in oneself one cannot do better than commend to the reader the very words of Gandhi in this behalf :—

Prayer

Prayer has saved my life. Without it, I should have been a lunatic long ago. I have had my share of the bitterest public and private experiences. They threw me into temporary despair. If I was able to get rid of that despair, it

was because of prayer. Prayer has not been a part of my life as truth has been. Prayer came out of sheer necessity. I found myself, in a plight where I could not possibly be happy without prayer. The more my faith in God increased, the more irresistible became the yearning for prayer. Life seemed to be dull and vacant without it.

I had attended the Christian religious services in South Africa, but they failed to grip me. My Christian friends. supplicated God, but I could not do so. I failed grievously, I started with a disbelief in God and prayer. And until at a late stage in life I did not feel anything like, a void in life. At that state, I felt that as food was indispensable to the body, so was prayer indispensable for the soul. In fact, food for the body is not so necessary as prayer for the soul. For starvation is often necessary in order to keep the body in health, but there is no such thing as prayer starvation. You cannot possibly have a surfeit of prayer.

Three of the greatest teachers of the world: Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed, have left unimpeachable testimony that they found illumination through prayer and could not possibly live without it. Millions of Christians, Hindus and Mussalmans, find their only solace in life in prayer. Either you vote them down as liars, or as self-deluded people. I will say that this "lying" has a charm for me, a truth-seeker, if it is "lying" that has given me that mainstay or staff of life, without which I could not dare to live for a moment. In spite of despair staring me in the face on the political horizon, I have never lost my peace. In fact, I have found people who envy my peace. That peace comes from prayer.

I am not a man of learning, but I humbly claim to be a man of prayer. I am indifferent as to the form. Everyone is a law unto himself in that respect. But there are some well marked roads, and it is safe to walk along the beaten tracks trod by the ancient teachers.

It is beyond my power to induce in you a belief in God. There are certain things which are self-proved and certain things which are not proved at all. The existence of God is like a geometrical axiom. It may be beyond our heart

grasp. I shall not talk of an intellectual grasp. Intellectual attempts are more or less fallacious, as a rational explanation cannot give you the faith in a living God. For it is a thing beyond the grasp of reason. It transcends reason.

There are various phenomena from which you can reason out the existence of God, but I shall not insult your intelligence by offering you a rational explanation of that type. I would have you brush aside all rational explanations and begin with a simple child-like faith in God. If I exist, God exists. With me it is a necessity of my being, as it is with millions. They may not be able to talk about it, but from their life you can see that it is part of their life.

Voluntary Poverty

When I found myself drawn into the political coil, I asked myself what was necessary for me in order to remain absolutely untouched by immorality, by untruth, by what is known as political gain......I do not propose to take you through all the details of that act or performance interesting and, to me, sacred though they are—but I can only tell you that it was a difficult struggle in the beginning and it was a wrestle with my wife and—as I can vividly recall—with my children also. Be that as it may, I came definitely to the conclusion that, if I had to serve the people in whose midst my life was cast and of whose difficulties I was witness from day to day, I must discard all wealth, all possession.

I cannot tell you with truth that, when this belief came to me, I discarded everything immediately. I must confess to you that progress at first was slow. And now, as I recall those days of struggle, I remember that it was also painful in the beginning. But, as days went by, I saw that I had to throw overboard many other things which I used to consider as mine, and a time came when it became a matter of positive joy to give up those things. And one after another then, by almost geometric progression, the things slipped away from me. And, as I am describing my experience, I can say a great burden fell off my shoulders, and I felt that I could now walk with ease and do my work also in the service of my fellow-men with great comfort and still greater joy. The

possession of anything then became a troublesome thing and a burden.

Exploring the cause of that joy, I found that, if I kept anything as my own, I had to defend it against the whole world. I found also that there were many people who did not have the thing, although they wanted it; and I would have to seek police assistance also if hungry famine-stricken people, finding me in a lonely place, wanted not merely to divide the thing with me but to dispossess me. And I said to myself: If they want it and would take it, they do so not from any malicious motive, but they would do it because theirs was a greater need than mine.

And then I said to myself: Possession seems to me to be a crime: I can only possess certain things when I know that others, who also want to possess similar things, are able to do so. But we know—every one of us can speak from experience—that such a thing is an impossibility. Therefore, the only thing that can be possessed by all is non-possession, not to have anything whatsoever. In other words, a willing surrender.

You might then well say to me: But you are keeping many things on your body even as you are speaking about voluntary poverty and not possessing anything whatsoever! And your taunt would be right, if you only superficially understood the meaning of the thing that I am speaking about just now. It is really the spirit behind. Whilst you have the body, you will have to have something to clothe the body with also. But then you will take for the body not all that you can get, but the least possible, the least with which you can do. You will take for your house not many mansions, but the least cover that you can do with. And similarly with reference to your food and so on.

Now you see that there is here a daily conflict between what you and we understand to-day as civilization and the state which I am picturing to you as a state of bliss and a desirable state. On the other hand, the basis of culture for civilization is understood to be the multiplication of all your wants. If you have one room, you will desire to have two rooms, three rooms, the more the merrier. And similarly, you will want to have as much furniture as you can put in your house,

and so on, endlessly. And the more you possess, the better culture you represent, or some such thing. I am putting it, perhaps, not as nicely sa the advocates of that civilization would put it, but I am putting it to you in the manner I understand it.

And, on the other hand, you find the less you possess, the less you want, the better you are. And better for what? Not for enjoyment of this life, but for enjoyment of personal service to your fellow-beings; service to which you dedicate yourselves, body, soul and mind......even the body is not yours. It has been given to you as a temporary possession, and it can also be taken from you by him who has given it to you.

Therefore, having that absolute conviction in me, such must be my constant desire that this body also may be surrendered at the will of God, and while it is at my disposal, must be used not for dissipation, not for self-indulgence, not for pleasure, but merely for service and service the whole of your waking hours. And if this is true with reference to the body, how much more with reference to clothing and other things that we use?......

And those who have actually followed out this vow of voluntary poverty to the fullest extent possible (to reach absolute perfection is an impossibility, but the fullest possible extent for a human being) those who have reached the ideal of that stage, they testify that when you dispossess yourself of everything you have, you really possess all the treasures of the world. In other words, you really get all that is in reality necessary for you, everything. If food is necessary, food will come to you.

Many of you are men and women of prayer, and I have heard from very many Christian lips that they got their food in answer to prayer, that they get everything in answer to prayer. I believe it. But I want you to come with me a step further and believe with me that those who voluntarily give up everything on earth, including the body—that is to say, have readiness to give up everything (and they must examine themselves critically, rigidly and give always an adverse judgment against themselves)—those who will fol-

low this out will really find that they are never in want......
Want must not again be taken literally. God is the hardest task-master I have known on this earth and He tries you through and through. And when you find that your faith is failing or your body is failing you, and you are sinking, He comes to your assistance somehow or other and proves to you that you must not lose your faith and that He is always at your beck and call, but on His terms, not on your terms. So I have found. I cannot really recall a single instance when, at the eleventh hour, He has forsaken me......

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION

Gandhi's ambition is to live at peace alike with friend and foe and to identify himself with everything that lives. His nationalism or love of country is not an isolation or enlightened selfishness—but a "stage on the journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace." It is not as if that land is not on this earth and is attainable only beyond death. The journey is earthly and the destination is equally of this world. That is his religion and therefore it is that he says :—

> There are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul.

Human existence being a happy and harmonious blend of the soul and the body,—the latter as the vehicle and the former as the content, it is an obvious proposition that all attention to the vehicle and none to the content will kill the soul and develop the body. Equally all soul and no body makes life vague, intangible and ethereal. Gandhi has, therefore, not abandoned the world and its activities, though he is a Yogi or Sanyasi. The Indian Yogi takes on the title of *Theertha*, *Asrama*, *Vana*, *Aranya*, *Giri*, *Parvata*, *Sagara*, *Saraswati*, *Bharati*, *Puri*, mostly according to the place he chooses for his ministry.

Gandhi, however, has not sought the river or the sea, the hill or the forest, the town or the city; but rigid-

ly kept himself to village and its yokel as the field and the companions in whose service, the soul can realize itself. To him, therefore, politics and religion are no more apart from each other than body and soul. Either without the other becomes lopsided. They are the obverse and the reverse of the coin of life. They really constitute the full life. It has been said by psycho-medical authority that Asceticism is a morbid state of mystic joy, arising from the pleasure that the spiritual *ego* takes in its own expansion until it comes into contact with divinity. It is accompanied by constantly growing detachment from the ordinary concerns of life, abandonment of personal duties, and in the more marked cases isolation in caves or on mountains and closer relations with the divinity. In the legend of Buddha, who passed years on the mountains of Ourouvela, in the stories of St. Catherine of Siena, St. Anthony, St. Francis of Assisi, and many others, we see that apostles of religion passed periods of contemplative isolation in alternation with seasons of propaganda and apostolate. Gandhi's life does not reveal any such alternation between *Pravrithi* and *Nivrithi*. To charge Gandhi therefore, with having burdened politics with religion or corrupted religion by politics is not to understand the basal structure and functions of life or human society. This is the root of his cult of non-violence. Friend and foe are alike to him and if we have to combat either, we can do so only within the bounds of non-violence.

Rightly or wrongly, the Congress does not believe in water-tight compartments on a communal basis. If religion is allowed to be as it is, a personal concern and a matter between man and his Maker there are many dominating, common factors between the two which

will compel common life and common action. Religions are not for separating men from one another. They are meant to bind them—and not become a potent cause of strife and *mutual slaughter*.

Gandhi deeply deplores that India is becoming irreligious. Here he is not thinking of any particular religion, but of that religion which underlies all religions. "We are turning away from God." That is his feeling and fear. Gandhi has defined God on one occasion as Truth, on a second as:—

> An indefinable, mysterious power that pervades everything, a living power that, underlying all change in an ever-changing, ever-dying world, is itself changeless, that holds all together, creates, dissolves and recreates. That power or spirit is God.

Gandhi a Sanatanist

Gandhi has been a puzzle to the religious men of the world. He does not reject the labels of the day but does not present the contents they imply. He is proud of calling himself a Sanatanist but does not fear to proclaim that he does not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas or for the matter of that, of the Bible, the Quoran or the Zend Avasta. He would give equal place to all. *Ahimsa*, *Satya*, *Brahmacharya* and *Aparigraha* are to him the four cardinal pillars on which the edifice of Sanatanism has been reared. Mere knowledge counts for nothing with him for his aim is the combination of perfect purity with perfect learning.

> Varnasrama is, in my opinion, [says he], inherent in human nature and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science. The four divisions define a man's calling, they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse.

All *Varnas* are designed to render service equally precious. Gandhi has worked out a new synthesis in his own life, of the four Varnas and the four Asramas.

In an age which can no longer enforce the old divisions in water-tight compartments, Gandhi represents the real synthesis of the Varnas, being the Brahmin that spreads knowledge, the Kshatriya that offers protection, the Vyasya that mobilises wealth and the Sudra that produces it. In this scheme of life, the counterpart of Varna is Asrama. The Varnas cover society,—indeed cover the whole Hindu race. The Asramas control the life of each individual Hindu. Brahmacharya in the first twenty-five years, married life next for another twenty-five, Vanaprastha later for ten, to be followed finally by Sanyas,—these are the four stages of the evolution of man through *knowledge*, through *faith* and through service (works); all becoming single-pointed in the spirit of *sacrifice*. The worship of the idol is but a part of human nature which hankers after symbolism. Gandhi does not object to it. Hinduism lives at peace with all other religions and does not claim the exclusiveness of truth for itself and therefore is not proselytizing religion. There is much in Gandhi's life which brings us into close relationship with the cult and teachings of Christianity. So much so, that Gandhi's life has attracted the world's Christian statesman to him. "He who would be great amongst you, let him be your servant," said Jesus and that Gandhi is.

Hinduism, he holds, is undoubtedly a religion of renunciation of the flesh so that the spirit may be free and has thus reached the highest limit of self-restraint. The cow is to him "a poem on pity" and typifies "the entire subhuman world" and is worshipped as the mother to millions. Hinduism is not an exclusive religion

and is therefore not proselytizing, nor even a missionary religion. To each man, his own *Dharma* and all religions to live at peace with one another—that is Hinduism. It is the growth of ages, but all such ancient growth brings its excrescences untouchability is one such and has to be exorcised.

Gandhi and Christianity

It is Gandhi himself who has posited the proposition that the—

> Great teachers of mankind have not had their places given to them. That place has belonged to them as a matter of right, as a matter of service. But, it is the privilege of the lowest and humblest amongst us to *feel* certain things about it.

Here Gandhi draws deliberately, a contrast between 'give' and 'take' for he holds that neither he nor anybody else can possibly arrogate to himself the claim of *giving* a place to a great man. In this view, Gandhi himself has carved out his own niche in the valahalla of India's national saints and martyrs, in the galaxy of the "great men" of the world. Gandhi sees in society only an enlarged edition of the family and therefore considers the domestic parallel as a valuable guide in adjudging social problems. In his view "the relation between ourselves and the great teachers is somewhat after the style of the relation between wife and husband." And to us as to him "it would be a terrible thing—a tragic thing, if I were to argue out intellectually for myself what place I was to give to the wife of my heart."—(Article on Jesus—p. 338).

To him Jesus is one among the mighty teachers of the world and "those, who no matter to what faith they

belong reverently study the teaching of other faiths, broaden instead of narrowing their own hearts...... A Liberal Education should include the reverent study of all other faiths." Gandhi holds that the basis of all education should "subordinate the culture of the mind to the culture of the heart."

> We may [according to him], each one of us, be putting our own interpretation of the word "God." We must of necessity do so, for God embraces, not only this tiny globe of ours, but millions and billions of such globes and world's beyond worlds. How can we, little crawling creatures, possibly measure His greatness, His boundless love, His infinite compassion? So great is His infinite love and pity that He allows man insolently to deny Him, and even to cut the throat of his fellowman.

Gandhi's latest writings show his belief that—

> The ultimate definition of religion may be said to be obedience to the Law of God. God and His law are synonymous terms. Therefore God signifies an unchanging and living being. No one has ever really found him. But *Avatars* and prophets have by means of their tapasya, given to mankind a faint glimpse of the eternal law and assigned to each one amongst us the work of the moral scavenger—so as to clean and purify 'our hearts and get them ready.'

Advice to the Missionaries

It required uncommon courage to tell the missionaries of Ceylon that—

> We do not need to proselytize either by our speech or by our writing. We can only do so with our lives. Let our lives be open books to study.

And to follow it up with the exhortation that they—

> should not consciously or unconsciously lay violent hands upon the manners and customs of this country in so far as they are not repugnant to fundamental morality.
>
> It is not part of your call [said he], I assure you to tear up the lives of the people of the East by their roots. Humility is the one virtue he would exalt over all pride and patriotism.

The great diversity between the Sermon on the Mount and the life led by the Christian nations of the day has led him to regard that "much of what passes for Christianity is a negation of the Sermon on the Mount". He could accept "Jesus as a martyr, an embodiment of sacrifice and a divine teacher, but not as the most perfect man ever born," i.e., as the *poorna purusha*. From the point of view of sacrifice, he feels that the Hindus greatly surpassed the Christians.

> Hinduism, as I know it [says Gandhi], entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being and I find solace in the Bhagavad Gita and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount.

He has studied all religions and found all to be right but all to be imperfect. India is a land "where every prospect pleases—and only man is vile," but where "Truth and God are personified in a little pariah's hut."

Religion and the Higher Powers

Religion is a working hypothesis for reconciling the irreconcilable experiences of life, through the invocation of a third force neither external nor internal exclusively, to man but all pervasive, and therefore all powerful and all knowing. No one can contend that religion has always tended to improve character or develop consciousness. But it has all along brought

into being, certain tenets and observances, certain rites and ceremonies, as invariable accompaniments of its preaching and practice. The profession of faith in the one and the practice of the other have undoubtedly served as aids to the cultivation of a wider outlook and a more humane view of life. They may have fostered superstition, but they have kindled faith and stirred up emotion. In one word, they have proved to be the one channel of educating the people and have engendered virtues such as *service* and *sacrifice*. It is possible that by the suppression of the self, and the constant meditation of the good of others, a superior plane of consciousness is developed, and too, superior powers are generated. The birds and the animals possess such superior powers which we call instinct. They possess them because of the non-development of the ordinary powers of speech and reasoning which man, standing higher in the scale of creation, commands. But man develops those superior instincts of the lower orders of creation by suppressing these superior powers of theirs, by observing silence, by fasting, by foregoing sleep and undergoing mortifications of the flesh. He thus develops an insight into the future, a ready discernment of the right from the wrong, and a control over the involuntary functions of the organs of the body. Such higher powers are always considered by the *Sadhus*, the *mantravethas* and the Rishis of India as hurtful and corrupting, when misused.

It is therefore necessary to use them for public good and not for personal ends. If Jesus in his three years' ministry acquired such mighty influence over the people and invoked the wrath alike of the Jews and the Gentiles, of the Sadducees and the Pharisees, of Pontius Pilate as well as Herod, it is because he

would not bend before them or allow himself to be tempted into ways that would betray his powers. All this may sound mysticism or megalomania, but one must study these principles in their application to Gandhi who is intensely religious, but is peculiarly free from the tyranny of Karma, who is highly devout and prayerful, but is not a victim to emotion and excitement, who observes his own sacrament of spinning but does not lay pretensions to any unique sanctimoniousness of his own. To him spinning is as obligatory and sacred an occupation as *Sandhyavandan*, *Brahmayajna* and *Pithri Tarpan* are to a Sanatanist, or as *Vazuh* and *Panch Namaz* are to a Maulvi or as the *Lord's prayer* to the clergyman under orders. To Gandhi "meditation is nothing but a discourse addressed by the intellect to the will," only corrected and chastened doubtless by an adequate play of emotion. He does not live in an abstract world of thought—divorced from realities. He is the great professor of a new synthesis for which our seminaries make no provision. He applies his mind to the hard facts of life. A chief minister should, in a Government, be the great co-ordinating head, the synthetizer of the different aspects of his Government. Gandhi is the super-synthetizer who can compare province with province, enforce prohibition, accelerate the progress of the removal of untouchability and consolidate the theory and practice of Khaddar as well as the village industries. Gandhi views the world as one family in which each unit must be a well-developed factor, and to this end Indian national life must be a perfected whole so that it may not only be an example to other units, but that all units may, by coming together, help to raise an edifice of perfect artistic excellence, economics, self-competence and ethical infallibility. This is his

religion—rendered in terms of the concrete.

Stephen Hobhouse narrates the story of how on a noisy motor road leading into the ancient but now industrialised town of Garlibs, German Silecia, there was placed only a fifty years ago, a statute in honour of the great but little known Christian, Jakob Boehme, on the base of which have been inscribed his own words of faith and warning, Liebe *U* and *D* dumut, Unsar, *S* schwart—"Love and Humility is our Sword."

Its power

To the pure politician, humility is not only unknown but undesirable. "I have no humility in me" said a top notch politician one day, "it is not in my dictionary"—no, nor is it in his life. Yet on occasions we all preface our remarks with an emphatic protestation of humility. That of course, is rhetorical, not ethical. Gandhi's real strength, his whole strength and his full strength is rooted in his humility or meekness. If non-violence is love and charity to all, it implies a certain self-effacement characterized by absence of desire or possession. The natural consequence is the virtue of humility which takes pleasure in service to others, not exaltation of self, which generates compassion uncontaminated by a spirit of condescension. Humility and non-attachment, humility and absence of desire, humility and celibacy are all therefore mutually inter-related, operating as cause and effect, establishing in the result, a precious circle of movement in which the sediment of selfishness is centrifuged, as it were, and thrown down to the bottom and the supernatant fluid—limpid and pure, exhibits the virtues of love and long-suffering, purity

of motive and freedom from pride and suspicion, abandonment of desire and abstention from fear. "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth," said Christ two thousand years ago. Yes, that is true today, only they must have faith in meekness. Gandhi has demonstrated this by his life. There are many people who can speak better than Gandhi, a few that can write equally well, multitudes that are richer, but this man of less than average height, and health, and of a little over average abilities, has wielded power over kings and rulers, claimed attention from despots and democrats and commanded the obeisance alike of scholars and savants, premiers and peers of the realm, economic experts and ecclesiastical dignitaries, not because of his intellect, not because he is a hero of hundred platforms, not because of his moral precepts or economic theories, not because of his sonorous speeches or sententious sayings, but because he has chosen to do what he means and to mean what he says, and has led a holy life. The heroic has no charms for him. Reputation counts for nothing with him. Numbers do not add to his strength. Loneliness does not baffle him. Alone in the midst of gloom, he sees the light with his inner eye; in the midst of cavil, he follows the promptings of his inner voice, for through unselfishness, through absence of pride, through suppression of desire and fear, he has cultivated yogic powers of perception, developed the innate instinct of humanity and reaps the reward of his humility in his thousand virtues: "Human greatness", it is said, "has many dimensions. What determines its permanence is depth" and *humility* is the trait of character that characterizes and indicates it.

Humility is a quality which can be easily dissembled by its counterfeit,—not merely its counterfeit but the

very opposite of it. It is difficult to say when pride masquerades as humility and *when* humility is pure and undefiled playing its genuine part in life. In operation, the results may be the same but the motives that inspire the act are different. The refusal of a procession or an address, of a photo or a garland may be as much the result of a lurking pride inside, which spurns the traditional honours of the world, as of a desire for self-effacement of a *bona fide* character. But though it starts as pride, the constant practice of it generates the proper quality and converts the spurious into sterling, the baser coin into the nobler. Humility conserves energy and converts it into power. It develops a moral momentum, the like of which neither learning nor wealth, neither pomp nor pride is capable of giving rise to.

Let us recall what Prof. Ivan Pavlov has said to the 'Soviet Youth':—

> I wish you modesty. Never think that you know all, in the midst of praise have the courage to say 'I am ignorant' Don't let pride conquer you. It will make you obstinate where you should be yielding, it will make you refuse good advice and friendly help, it will make you lose the measuring rod of objectivity. In the body of people I direct everything depends upon the general atmosphere. We all work together and each contributes according to his powers and talents. You cannot separate one from another—'the mine' from 'yours' and our common work only benefits from this.

"Do you enjoy your meal Mahatmaji?" asked the writer recently while he was munching his green leaves and his dry bread. "Yes", said he. "With a gusto and relish?" pursued the writer. "Well, that I can't say," said Gandhi, "the fact is that gusto and relish are for the person who picks and chooses his articles of diet, prescribes the method of their preparation, ex-

pects a certain taste and aroma and feels gratified on getting them." But Gandhi stands for the control of the animal passions and begins with the control of the palate. The constant indulgence in these "carnal vanities" leads to unsuspected vices—such as a desire to hoard against the dictates and decrees of Nature that provides adequately for all life's wants, to disparities in society,—tall oaks and short poppies. Even higher and more exacting is the virtue of non-possession or *Aparigraha*. When these virtues are practised, life will transform itself into a trustful of opportunities for service of others, free from fear or desire and therefore a vehicle for the exercise of the injunctions of Truth and Ahimsa.

There is a word not quite familiar to outsiders, but wholly familiar to the Indians which cannot be rendered into English. The *tapas* of the ancient *rishis* indicates their "internal fire and fervour, ascetic purity, intensity of aspiration and resolve, mortification and subjugation of the flesh" as Babu Bhagwandas has well defined. Rendered into concrete terms, it means *yama*, and *dama*, *dharma* and *dana*, *soucha* and *kshama*. The body is controlled, the senses are restrained, the passions are curbed. Anger is met with forgiveness. Purity rules all conduct. Benevolence to all becomes the invariable rule.

Religion and Politics

To enquirers from the West, whose mind has been moulded into compartments called social, political and religious, Gandhi presents a puzzle. When asked to explain the fundamental motive of his work for India, by some of the Christian pilgrims who visited Wardha, Gandhi said, My motive has been purely religious. I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified

myself with the whole of mankind; and this I could not do unless I took part in politics. The full gamut of man's activities today constitues an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, political and religious work into water-tight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack reducing life to a thing of "sound and fury signifying nothing." Thus is it that Gandhi has become a personage of wide catholicity and could draw his disciples from remote continents and distant faiths. His is the Abraham's bosom that finds a warm corner for the idolator, the fire-worshipper and the worshipper of God in Truth and spirit.

> If I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics today encircles us like the coils of a snake from which one cannot get out no matter how one tries. I wish to wrestle with the snake......I am trying to introduce religion into politics.

"Most religious men I have met are politicians in disguise. I, however, who wear the guise of a politician am at heart a religious man." When, during Mr. Montague's visit to India, in 1917, Gandhi interviewed him, Montague asked him why he 'really a social reformer' entered into politics. Gandhi replied saying that it was because he was a social reformer that he was driven to take part in politics. Such really was the upshot of foreign rule which kept itself at a safe distance from the real springs of human progress in society and therefore petrified custom and prevented all growth and advancement through the silent influence of a king who in every self-governing country is not merely the protector of his subjects and the political head of the State, but is the first citizen and social head of the nation.

In politics, views are more or less inherited in self-governing countries. In a subject country views are formed fairly early in life, and politicians seldom change them. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah Mehta, Surendra Nath and Bhupendra Nath remained to the end what they were at the commencement of their public careers. Lajpatrai, Tilak and Bepin Chandra Pal (Lal Bal Pal), were nationalists from the outset and remained so to the end as votaries of responsive co-operation. They were not reconciled to non-co-operation in all its significance. But Gandhi presents the strange spectacle of a born moderate, being the son of a Dewan of an Indian State, the product of English training in England, a Barrister-at-Law by profession, an upholder of the established order and, one who had abundant faith in British character, changing, after the great war, his whole mental attitude and convictions. And not seldom did he exhibit the conflict between his convictions and his affections. When he visited His Majesty the King of England, in 1931, pointed attention was drawn to the change that came over him since 1918. He had organized an ambulance corps in the South African war and in the Zulu Rebellion. He recruited for Britain in 1917. Then came a change over him. But long before King George V pointed this out, Gandhi himself had written to Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy in August, 1, 1920, that is to say, on the day of inauguration of the non-co-operation movement as follows:—

> Your Excellency's light-hearted treatment of official crime, your exoneration of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Mr. Montague's despatch and, above all, the shameful ignorance of the Punjab events and the callous disregard of the feelings of Indians betrayed by the House of Lords have filled me with gravest misgivings regarding the future of the Empire, have es-

> tranged me completely from the present Government and have disabled me from rendering, as I have hitherto whole-heartedly rendered, my loyal co-operation.

There is a conflict between the politics of a man who promotes and builds up a party and the philosophy which prescribes a certain detachment. Gandhi has made a new synthesis here between to quote Hocking's words, the "detachment of the Sanyasi and the effectiveness of the Statesman." The former only reinforces the latter.

Politics is the craft of weaving the warp of tradition and the woof of environment into the "History of our own Times." The times and the Time-spirit vary from era to era and with them varies the character of the politics of the day. In India politics constitutes the prime passion that moves and shapes public life. The notables are the politicians. The newspapers deal with politics from the superscription to the subscription. But latterly, politics has come to embrace all that legitimately should fall within its range. It has steadily passed from agitation against foreign rule to reconstruction of Indian nationalism in all its outstanding aspects. Khaddar has been recognized not only as a symbol of renaissance but as the economic prop of a reordered society, the key to the problem of poverty and destitution and the fore-runner of a series of village industries through which alone the village could once again be installed as the basis of Indian Nationalism. The removal of untouchability has become easy by the political status to which the Harijans are admitted as the result of Gandhi's fast unto death. They walk with their head raised, with a sense of self-respect beaming in their countenances. For this one act of emancipation alone the Mahatma could have laid down his life, but through a lingering love of justice kindled in Ramsay Macdonald, the

Premier in 1932, Gandhi's life was saved to achieve higher ends still, to bring the two great communities of India together and wipe out the sin money on which the British had reared their political structure for over a century. True, the demon of drink has still to be driven out and the rift between the Hindus and Muslims had yet to be sealed. But these awaited fulfilment through Provincial autonomy. Was the Congress then to participate in the elections that would perforce be held under the Government of India Act of 1935, or was it to boycott them? Was it to combat the Act from within the Legislatures and the Cabinets or was it to offer obstruction from outside the cabinet or even the legislature? These were the outstanding issues that confronted Gandhi from the year 1935 onwards.

These are to Gandhi not aspects of national life divorced from the larger problem of India's freedom. Indeed, they are inseparable issues arising out of the central problem. And all these issues have been settled not as a politician would settle and solve but as a prophet would see. The moral and the spiritual aspects have always gained ascendancy over the purely political and the inter-blending of religion and politics has helped to build up the foundations of a State which would be purely Indian in structure as well as functions. But it has also led to conflicts between the sacred and the secular, between the Congress and the Asrams, between the political organizations and the ethical institutions.

CHAPTER VIII

ASRAMS

Asrams are not crowds but groups of friends and fellow-workers who follow particular tenets and observe particular disciplines. These friends and fellow-workers soon become known as apostles. Christ had twelve such apostles, so had Rama Krishna Paramahamsa. Aldous Huxley thinks that "Twenty or even as many as thirty people can work together and still remain a group." The Benedictines, he tells us, were divided into groups of ten under a dean—the same number that constitutes a communist cell. The Asrams are research centres where new truths are rationalized or old truths are revivified. It is not merely clarification but propaganda and promulgation of literature that the truth requires for its spread. The prophet sees, the sage speaks in 'riks' or 'rikans.' The disciples translate the ideas into practice and build up "small working models of the better society" envisaged by the former. Here it is that the old adage comes true—that an ounce of example is better than a ton of theory. You may speak volumes on spinning but a hank of yarn spun by your own hand appeals to popular imagination. And when you can show that the cloth you wear is woven out of your own self-spun yarn, the appeal to the populace would be irresistible. It is thus that the ancient Rishis Vasishta, Athri, Bharadwaja, Maithravaruna, Kaundina, Srivatsa, Kausika, propounded their culture and philosophy. The Gandhi

Seva Sangh* is one such organization of devoted men who accept Gandhi's philosophy of life. Admission to such bodies is always made after testing the entrants by rigid standards during a long period of probation. The Servants of India Society adopts such rigidity but it is lacking in the spiritual atmosphere. The Gandhi Seva Sangh has the right atmosphere but its tests are lax and therefore its membership has had to give way. Robert Owen erred likewise is not sifting the entrants into his colony, but where the New Harmony failed to do, the Oneida community succeeded because John Humphry Noyes enforced a severe probation before admission (p. 130, Aldous Huxley—Ends and Means). The Brahmins constituted such an order at one time but when poverty yielded place to property, their degeneration began. The Soviets of Russia and the Nazis, are all such groups but the ideals of both are rooted in violence. The Congressmen of India are a band—rather a large band, of citizens not wedded to a way of life but pledged to non-violence which, in reality, when practised seriously, evolves itself into a way of life. The vital principles holding together any band of reformers are apt to become (in course of time) dry formulae, nay cloaks for adventures and swindlers to get into it, especially when wealth accumulates, as mostly and unfortunately it does, despite the fact that they all start in poverty. The basis of all such organizations is that learning should be wedded to poverty and discipline, service and sacrifice. Aldous Huxley compares the disciplines of different groups of theological reformers in Europe. Between the higher militarism

* A detailed study of the Sangham and its vicissitudes is given in a separate section.

of Layola on the one hand with the Jesuit demand of "do and die, but not to reason why," and on the other, the complete democracy of a Quaker committee which acted upon the *sense* of a meeting, lay the constitutional monarchy of Benedictine monasticism which was "conspicuous for its discretion." Gandhi's Asrams have certain fundamental tenets but no set rules or regulations of a rigid or inflexible character. They are groups of men whose achievement has often depended upon the altitudes reached by their leader. It is generally true of all such "orders" that when the leader passes away, the order disappears or degenerates.

Anyway the Gandhian Asrams have done much for determining the march of national progress along the direction of non-violence and to the end that the village shall be the foundation of the new social order of culture and economics. One *seeming* drawback, however, is that a course of three hour spinning is accounted a better training for the battle of life than the study of geography and history, but in reality strange and unexpected developments have emerged from this "uninspiring, mechanical discipline." The whole scheme of education has itself been recast and made to centre not round an alphabet, literacy and memorization but round a craft.* The youth of the country must be trained and equipped so as to subserve the new needs of a renascent India, with a clear bias for agriculture, crafts and indigenous culture. The Asrams have added to their programme of work teaching on these new lines and also medical aid, as legitimate channels of service to the rural areas. They are, if comparison is permissible, like the pioneer and demonstration factories which precede large industrial

* This aspect is elaborated in the Chapter on education.

organizations. They conceive a hypothesis and establish the theory relating to it by working it out in practice. They prove their faith by their conduct, and discipline themselves in shaping aright such conduct. They have obligations and duties as individuals, they have also attitudes to cultivate as members of groups and of that larger group which we are won't to call society. It must be their purpose and hope to make their principles acceptable by the masses, for neither Truth nor Non-violence can or should ever be the monopoly of individuals or even groups. They must aspire to become leaders of the masses not in coveting honours or enjoying preferments but in being prepared to die without killing. They must cultivate gentleness of attitude, a persuasive expression, and patience. It is thus that we lay the foundations of a *Santi Sainya* or a Peace brigade and of a mass Satyagraha at the same time. It may look over-optimistic but nevertheless it is true that to such appeals, to such stimuli, the response of the masses will be prompt and adequate.'

The Working of Asrams

In Gandhi's Asrams almost the first discipline to which a new-comer is subjected and in which the old in-dwellers revel, is the manual and "menial" service they are called upon to render. To clean their own plates and wash their own clothes and sweep their own rooms and build their own huts, is perhaps not altogether out of the way, though judging from the life led by our young men and women in the hostels, the innovations of the Asram are apt to strike as odd. But when the inmates are required to do the scavenging, remove buckets of excreta and wash the receptacles, one is apt to think that the discipline is

not only new but exacting. When, however, graduates of the university, young men and young women alike perform this task as a part of daily routine with patience, devotion and good cheer, the joy of the work soon becomes infectious and is shared even by the casual guest with alacrity, for, if nothing else, there is in it a charm of novelty which does not readily wear off, for because conviction grows with the regular discharge of new duties and ere long love and sympathy dawn upon your mind for that outcast of society—the Bhangi who makes your life happy and is in turn consigned to a life of untouchability. One touch of service revives the sense of humanity and makes the world kin. Regular hours of work and food, regular dietary free from condiments and spices, but abounding in nutriment, regular prayer night and morning, sacramental spinning in addition to the vocational training, hospitality to guests, conversations and questionings as between the master and the pupils, free mixing of men and women, gardening, open air life, physical labour,—all tend to give a certain fullness and inspiration to Asram life. In addition, a course of periodical fasting, and silence constitute real tonics to body and soul alike, and recondition both in an effective measure. Gandhi's fasts are now well known. He undertook a fast unto death thrice—once for the Ahmadabad mill labourers, a second time against the dismemberment of the Harijans from the Hindu community for purposes of political franchise and elections, and thirdly in Rajkot to secure a fulfilment by the Durbar of the promises he had made. His fasts are meant to "sting the Hindu conscience" and awaken it from its age-long slumber into a consciousness of the wrongs it has inflicted upon fellow members of society—to wit the untouchables. Gandhi's silence is but the handmaid

of his fast. Every Monday he observes a twenty four hour silence and a twelve hour fast and latterly he has been observing general silence.* Of course, he is not a slave to his own injunctions and impositions for he has far too lively a sense of his plan and work in the world to stultify himself by observances which paralyse him.

It is in small settlements wherein the philosophy of plain living and high thinking is inculcated by the inmates that all great cults have received their nourishment and it is from them as centres of radiation that they are broad-cast. The primitive cloisters thus broadcast the teachings of Christ and helped to build up the great civilization of the Middle Ages.

The *Asrams* in effect are seminaries like the Buddhistic Viharas meant to discipline and "drill" the pupils seeking *Siksha* at them. They are an ancient institution, which has been revived by Mahatma Gandhi even as it had been revived by Swami Vivekananda and Rama Krishna. They may be known by different names, being sometimes called *mutts*, but whether you call them Chaityas or Viharas or Mutts or Asramas, they remain centres of intellectual enlightenment, no less than of spiritual culture and social service. The whole life in the Asram is directly regulated by and has reference to, the plans of national reconstruction which the alumni have to undertake. It may be that to the superficial observer steeped in mundane affairs, and given to the enjoyment of the good things of the world, these Asrams look like *mutts* of Bairagies or the cloisters of monks and nuns but when we know their inner working, we also shall know that Gandhi's Asrams have, while

* The Subject of silence has been dealt with in greater detail in the chapter on Technique.

fulfilling their essential purpose and aim, given ample scope for the right development of life with all due restraints, to the young inmates in the formative period of their lives. The activities of the Asram comprise the constructive programme, chiefly centering round what people may glibly call "menial" and manual services. There is nothing menial in manual service and all manual service is considered noble and up-lifting, such as spinning and weaving, including carding and silvering. The imparting of education to the poor, the rendering of medical assistance to the needy, co-operative effort occasionally, sanitary and hygienic propaganda always, the running of libraries, the holding of arbitration courts, the organizing of exhibitions and the spreading of general knowledge as a part of the scheme of adolescent education,—all these coupled with the vow of celibacy and non-possession practised by the inmates of the Asram constitute the right training to the Desa Sevaks and Sevikas in the vast work of socio-economic regeneration that awaits them in an emancipated mother-land.

Asrams must be centres of life currents—not repositories of mendicant monies. They must liberate energy, create food and raiment and become self-supporting, not live on the principle of patrons and patriots, the former maintaining the latter.

CHAPTER IX

THE GANDHI SEVA SANGH

If the Asrams are so many constellations of self-luminous stars in the blue firmament of human life, there stands in the midst of them all a radiant orb, the very heart of a helio-centre system shedding its effulgence over the planets and their satellites that are eternally revolving round it. The Gandhi Seva Sangh is not a mere Fellowship group nor a study circle. It is a brotherhood of seekers of Truth which has been recently holding its annual sessions in different provinces—Savli (1936) in Maharashtra, Hudli (1937) in Kannada, Delang (1938) in Orissa, Brindavan (1939) in Behar and Malikanda (1940) in Bengal. Neither is the Sangh a religious order with rigid rules and iron discipline. It is an association of seekers, Sadhaks and strivers after self-purification carrying on research into the fields of ethics and economics which have become covered over with the debris of the modern times resulting from the tornadoes of materialism and machinery which have swept the country from end to end.

> It (the Sangh) arose out of the exigencies of the political situation, [we are told], in 1923, when Gandhiji was undergoing a long term of imprisonment, when his own aims and ideals seemed to be in the melting pot and Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj who had been one of the most ardent followers and counted the pursuit of his principles and ideals more precious than his wealth, donated magnificent sum for the carrying on of the National work on Gandhi's lines. The

programme and policy of the Sangh founded by Sjt. Jamnalal Bajaj went on evolving with those of the Congress during the years 1924 to 1929, with the result that the object of the Sangh came to be 'National service according to the principles of Mahatma Gandhi,' and was confined to carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress. In 1930, came the clarion call of the Congress for a national campaign of Civil Disobedience and until the beginning of 1934, most of the trustees and members of the Sangh were in Jail. After the indefinite suspension of the programme of Civil Disobedience in the middle of 1934, the Sangh's policy and programme became more defined, its constitution altered to widen the scope of its membership; and the institution was in 1937 composed of about a hundred members pledged to carry out in their private and public lives the principles of truth and non-violence, and to carry on all work of national service by means based strictly on truth and non-violence. The eleven principles of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, brahmacharya, non-possession, body-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi, spirit of unexclusive or universal brotherhood, are now the definite articles of this creed.

As Gandhi said in one of his speeches at Savli in 1936:—

I should be satisfied if your Sangh became a register of workers who have complete faith in all activities which are the concrete expression of truth and non-violence or rather of non-violence (for the practice of non-violence is impossible without an acceptance of truth). Thus let no member say that he believes in truth and non-violence, but does not believe in handicrafts or khadi and service of the villagers there-through, or that he believes in truth and non-violence but does not believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, or in the removal of untouchability. If you meet such a one you may tell him that it may be possible that he is a believer in truth and non-violence according to his own conception, but not according to Gandhiji's conception of them, and that he cannot, therefore, be a member of the Sangh. Beyond this, your Sangh has no credal, regional, or institutional limita-

tions. Your members may belong to any caste or creed, any race or nation.

It was a hotly debated point in 1937 at Hudli whether members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh could stand for the Legislatures or not. At Hudli, Gandhi pointed out how his advice was sought after certain nominations had been filed and in 1939 the question whether the Sangh should have its own political party was discussed and ruled out at Brindaban. Even at Delang in 1938, Gandhi had invited the Conference of the Sangh to be members of a Peace army to quell the communal riots which were fast becoming the order of the day. At Brindaban he chose to take the members a step further in self-introspection. He called it the new *technique*, but really it consisted in taking one's *ahimsa* to the utmost extent possible i.e., divesting oneself of all trace of rancour or ill-will towards the opponent.

Gandhi Seva Sangh and Legislatures

We give below the relevant portions of a speech delivered by Gandhi at Hudli in 1937, on the Subject of Legislatures:—

> The boycott of the legislatures, let me tell you, is not an eternal principle like that of truth or non-violence. My opposition to them has considerably lessened, but that does not mean that I am going back on my former position. The question is purely one of strategy, and I can only say what is most needed at a particular moment. Am I the non-co-operator I was in 1920? Yes, I am the same non-co-operator. But it is forgotten that I was a co-operator too in the sense that I non-co-operated for co-operation, and even then I said that if I could carry the country forward by co-operation I should co-operate. I have now advised going to the legislatures not to offer co-operation but to demand co-operation.

A vast number of our people have secured the right to vote—nearly one-third of those who can vote. The elections gave us an opportunity of carrying the whole Congress programme to them. If that was so, were the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh to stand aloof? We are pledged to the constructive programme no doubt, but are we not then bound to see that those who go there in our name also carry the constructive programme? Remember that no political programme can stand without the constructive programme. The whole of that programme is a symbol of truth and non-violence, and it is the prime function of the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh to see that it does not suffer in any way.

Gangadharrao Deshpande reminded me of what I said at Faizpur, viz., that I was one of the 31½ crores who had no right to vote. But that has no relevance to the point at issue today. What was our duty as members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh? Could we well have asked the people to refrain from voting? The Gandhi Seva Sangh is a voluntary organization formed to carry out the Congress programme. The Sardar enlisted every one of his workers in Gujarat, including the members of the Sangh, to throw themselves heart and soul in the elections. Could he do otherwise? Should we have won the elections otherwise? Where else was he to find his election workers from? Was he to keep aloof and say: 'No, I have nothing to do with the elections, I am pledged to the constructive programme?' Rajagoppalachari decided to stand for the Assembly. When after the event we had a moment to ourselves he asked me about it. I told him he was free to do what he liked. He was no less a votary of truth and non-violence than I. In the Madras Presidency at least we had such sweeping victories because of the constructive work that was done there.

How was I to ask friends not to go to the legislatures? Was the Sardar, who went on sending people to the assemblies, to be asked to resign the membership of the Sangh? Jamnalalji helped the cause with his funds and otherwise. Was he to be asked to resign?

No. That could not be. We could form ourselves into a narrow coterie and remain aloof. That would be

ruining the constructive work of the Congress. And what is the Congress apart from its votaries?

Mind it is not that I am asking you to permit your members to go to the legislatures as a necessary evil. It may be a duty. The legislatures are today the representatives of the people. We have to carry out our truth and non-violence there. I have withdrawn from the Congress for reasons special to me and in order to help the Congress all the more. All my time and energy are dedicated to it so long as it swears by the programme of 1920, based on truth and non-violence. But how, it is asked, may we go to institutions to which we have been opposed? The legislatures of today are different from the old. We do not want to destroy them; we want to destroy the system which they are created to work.

We go there, if we do, not to sacrifice truth and non-violence but in order to vindicate them. Today the Congress has had to spend a few lakhs on elections. When we have become an irresistible power in the land we should have to spend not a single pie. But the fact is that we generally only talk of the constructive programme. What have we really achieved until now? How many experts in khadi science have we got today? If we had carried out the constructive programme to the full, there would have been no other party but the Congress party in any province.

But let me tell you that all that I have said does not mean that all of you should now begin thinking of the legislatures. Not only not all, but no one of the Sangh will attempt to go to the legislatures. What I mean to say is no one will shirk it, should an occasion arise. It does not need legal acumen to be able to go there. Bravery and steadfast faith in the constructive programme are all that is needed. If you went there I should expect you to ply your taklis there, to work for prohibition and for the constructive programme. But there should be no scramble for power. That will mean our undoing. Only those will go as are asked by the Gandhi Seva Sangh to go. I do not deny that legislatures are great temptation, almost like liquor booths. They hold out opportunities to self-seekers and job-hunters. But no Congressman, no member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh can go with

> that sordid object. The Congress leader will compel attention to the programme and will not permit the slightest tampering with it. Men thus pledged will go there out of a sense of duty and not as a necessary evil. We have, if we can, to fill all the eleven assemblies with such men true as steel and pledged to serve and with no axes to grind.
>
> As regards the oath of allegiance, I should ask no one to go there who has a conscientious objection to the oath. It is not a religious oath, so far as I understand the constitution, and it is wholly consistent with the demand for immediate and concrete independence.

Gandhi Seva Sangh rose by the year 1938, to the height of its strength. The number of full-fledged members of the Sangh increased from 102 to 118 and that of associate members and sympathisers from 31 to 39, thus making a total membership of 157—out of whom only 26 are paid from the funds of the Sangh, their remunerations ranging from Rs. 7 to Rs. 75 per mensem.

In making an appeal for self-examination at Delang (1938), Gandhi made one of his memorable speeches emphasising the power of non-violence and pointing out that it is not the weapon of the weak—but of the strong. Said he:—

> Supposing the Viceroy were to invite the President of the Congress to meet him and to state the Congress terms, do you think he would have the strength to say, "The Congress is capable of taking charge of the administration, the British may go?" Do you think we could tell him that we should be able to do without the police and the military, that we should be able to come to terms with the Princes, the Zamindars and with the Mussalmans? I am afraid we could not honestly say that we should easily be able to come to terms with these. And yet if we had real non-violence in us we should be able to say and do these things.
>
> I therefore ask you and myself whether our non-violence is of the weak instead of the strong as it should be. That it

can work to a certain extent in the hands of the weak is true. It has so worked with us. But when it becomes a cloak for our weakness, it emasculates us. Far better than emasculation would be the bravery of those who use physical force. Far better than cowardice would be meeting one's death fighting. We were perhaps all originally brutes, and I am prepared to believe that we have become men by a slow process of evolution from the brute. We were thus born with brute strength, but we were born men in order to realise God who dwells in us. That indeed is the privilege of man, and it distinguished him from the brute creation. But to realize God is to see Him in all that lives, i.e., to realize our oneness with all creation. This is impossible unless we voluntarily shun physical force and develop conscious non-violence that is latent in every one of us. This can only come out of strength. Have we the non-violence of the strong? It is open to us to discard it as an impossible ideal and choose instead the method of violence. But the choice has to be made.

And if it is a weapon of the strong, then there are some inescapable conclusions. We should be able to deal with riots and stop the increasing tension between Hindus and Mussalmans. What, you will ask, we as votaries of non-violence should have done to quell these riots? Well it was primarily the work of the Congress Committee to quell the riots. We should have thousands of volunteers ready to serve in a crisis of this kind. In 1921, we drew up a pledge for volunteers, wherein it was provided that a volunteer should be non-violent in thought, word and deed. Hakimsaheb Ajmal Khan, who was then President, had the same pledge accepted by the Khilafat volunteers. It was not without difficulty that the pledge was accepted by the Khilafat Conference. For a volunteer to be non-violent in word and deed was all right, some of the Maulanas said. But to expect them to be non-violent in thought was a tall order. I was seeking, they said, to be master of their minds. I said, 'No. The Mastery is to be of Ahimsa, not of any single individual.' Ultimately they accepted the pledge. But, in spite of our having accepted the pledge 17 years ago, we have not developed the irresistible strength that such

acceptance of *ahimsa* means. The reason is that we have not troubled, we have not laboured, to organise such a non-violent volunteer army. If we cannot do so, if we cannot carry out the pledge, it would be well to reconsider our position. The tragedy is that the pledge is still in existence but it exists on paper. If we had on a sufficient scale such a non-violent army as the pledge contemplates, we should not have had these riots; and if there had been, they would have quelled the riots or immolated themselves in the attempt. We have heard of only one who met his death. I admire his self-immolation. But my breast would have swelled with joy if there had been several Guptas. Do you think this is an empty dream? Do you think we cannot quell the riots even with such a non-violent army? If you really think so, if that is the conclusion that you arrived at after calm and dispassionate thinking, you must also conclude that Swaraj cannot be attained by means of non-violence.

Speaking at Brindaban at the 5th Session of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, Gandhi asked in doleful language:—

Now take the Congress corruption. Why should there be so much corruption in the Congress? How can we, with all that corruption, deserve the name 'Congressmen'? Some of you are known as 'Gandhi-ites.' 'Gandhi-ites' is no name worth having. Rather than that, why not Ahimsa-ites? For Gandhi is a mixture of good and evil, weakness and strength, violence and non-violence, but *ahimsa* has no adulteration. Now as *Ahimsa-ites* can you say that you practise genuine *ahimsa*? Can you say that you receive the arrows of the opponent on your bare breasts without returning them? Can you say that you are not angry, that you are not perturbed by his criticism? I am afraid many cannot say any such thing.

You will answer back saying you never claimed to practise *ahimsa* quite to that extent. If so I will confess that to that extent my execution was defective. *Ahimsa* magnifies one's own defects and minimises those of the opponent. It regards the mote in one's own eye as a beam and the beam in the opponent's eye as a mote. We have acted to the contrary.

On the question of the States we have wanted to reform their administration and to convert the rulers, not to destroy them. But our speech has often belied our profession.

Though I made the Statement about Rajkot, let me assure you that I am not going to leave Rajkot in the lurch, nor to desert my co-workers and suffer them to be demoralised. If I were to do so it would be a sure sign of dotage, and I am aware of no such thing coming over me. On the contrary I am praying that the workers there may grow every day in strength. I am only pleading for a radical change in the technique.

Having said this I come to the policy of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. If you have followed what I have said so far, you have perhaps realised that we shall have to remodel ourselves somewhat. We shall have to examine ourselves critically and find out whether we have stood the test. If in doing so we are found wanting, it would be better to reduce our numbers. Twenty genuine members with a heart-belief in truth and *ahimsa* are better than two hundred indifferent ones. They will one day drag us to destruction, the twenty may one day increase to two hundred genuine ones.

Has not corruption crept into the Sangh too? Have not the members given way to hypocrisy, suspicion, mutual distrust? I do not know all the members, I know the names of only a few, and I am not speaking from personal knowledge. I am speaking from limited experience. Jamnalalji is unfortunately not here today. He has often shared with me his experience of many institutions with which he is connected. Why should it be difficult to run them smoothly? Why can't we, with any amount of confidence, fling our workers from one part of the country to another to take charge of the work there?

Finally matters came to a crux in 1940 at Malikanda and all things having been duly considered, the strength of the Sangh was reduced but to nine and all the politicians resigned from it, some had indeed resigned earlier in anticipation of such a development. The subject may advantageously be studied in greater detail by re-

calling from the pages of Harijan some of Gandhi's remarkable speeches delivered on the occasions of the annual conferences of the Sangh which have become widely popular in the country and which have been looked forward to for weighty pronouncements upon the various aspects of Gandhian precepts and principles.

The Gandhi Seva Sangh—Its Constitution

1. (*a*) The object of the Sangh is service of the people in accordance with the principles of Satyagraha as laid down in the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi.

(*b*) In order to carry out the object of the Sangh the immediate activities recognized are as follows:

Revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving,
Service of the villages,
National Education,
Propagation of the national language,
Removing evils of drink and other intoxicants,
Service of all backward classes,
Establishment of inter-communal unity,
Improvement of the position of women,
Medical relief and nursing,
Relief works,
Improvement of cattle,
Publication of Gandhian literature,
and such other activities as the Karyavahak Samiti may permit.

Note—The expression "the principles of Satyagraha as laid down in the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi" means an eternal and humble search after Truth through the ever-progressive practice in thought, word and deed of the following and allied means of realizing it, viz., Non-violence, which includes love, control of the senses, non-possession, non-covetousness, freedom from fear, control of the palate, bread labour, neighbourliness (Swadeshi), removal of untouchability and conception of high and low, equal regard for all religions, and resistance of evil through good.

2. There are three classes of members in the Sangh: (*i*) the Sevak varga, (*ii*) the Sahayogi varga and (*iii*) the Sahayak varga.

3. No member can be admitted to membership unless (*i*) he declared his adherence to the object of the Sangh and, in particular, to the principle of Truth and Non-violence as a matter of faith, and (*ii*) in practice is a habitual wearer of khadi from a conviction that hand-spinning is an indispensable supplementary industry of villages, an abstainer from intoxicants, in his person associates with Harijans on terms of absolute equality, and promotes friendliness among peoples of different communities.

4. In addition, a Sevak must have a working knowledge of Hindustani, be fit and willing to do active work, constantly endeavour to translate the principles of Satyagraha in his own life and conduct, spin at the rate of not less than 1,000 yards per month, be a whole-time worker, and must not do any work for personal remuneration or profit without the permission of the Karyavahak Samiti.

5. A Sahayogi must regularly take part in one or more activities recognized by the Sangh, be amenable to the discipline of the Sangh in that respect, and must spin in the same way as a Sevak.

6. A Sahayak must render such regular financial assistance or contribute such lump sum donations to the cause of the Sangh as the President may consider adequate in each case.

7. The Karyavahak Samiti (Governing Body) of the Sangh is constituted as follows:

The president elected for five years from and by the Sevak members.

Six Sevak members elected from and by the Sevaks, each holding office for three years, but retiring by rotation annually in batches of two, and

Three trustees for life selected from the members of any class.